The Theosophic Messenger

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SHAMBALLAH.

I.

Thou the ancient center of the world, Shamballah,
From Thee stream forth God's world-compelling forces,
Thou the Seat of Earth's government!

II.

Oh, heavenly city! what are thy wonders, unimaginable!
Who dwells in thy weird palace halls of ancient masonry?
He, Earth's Lord, potent, invincible, divine, most patient!

III.

From Thee, O Infinite, streams out God's fohat!
From Thee comes all Earth's ordering most wise!
Thou the dispenser of high occult gifts!

IV.

O, mighty, merciful, most potent, wondrous Being!
World Lord, worshipped by Rishis in mind unwavering!
What man not gifted with Thy Power might view Thy face!

V.

Shamballah, home of the mighty One and His companions three!
Who reared thy ponderous mighty walls, thy towering battlements?
We dream of thee, thy imperishable inhabitants, City Celestial!

W. V-H.

THE JOURNEYINGS OF COL. OLCOTT FOR THEOSOPHY.

The first journey taken by Col. Olcott in the interests of Theosophy occurred before he knew anything about the religion-philosophy or had even heard its name. Yet this journey, entered upon so unconsciously, was the circumstance which led to his acquaintance of Madame Blavatsky, and to the forming of a movement of world-wide importance. In his earlier years the Colonel had been much interested in spiritualism, though he had of late paid no attention to it. But on an August morning in 1874, as he was casually reading a newspaper, he saw something that renewed his dormant attraction for occult wonders.. "I read an account" he writes in his diary, "of certain incredible phenomena, which were said to be occurring at a farm house in the township of Chittenden, in the state of Vermont, several miles distant from New York. I saw at once that if it were true that visitors could see, even touch and converse with deceased relatives, who had means to reconstruct their bodies and clothing so as to be temporaily solid, visible and tangible, this was the most important fact in modern science." For Col. Olcott to see an opportunity to learn something which would help on the knowledge and welfare of the race, was to act quickly. He went to Chittenden, remained in the Eddy homestead twelve weeks, sending to New York daily graphic letters reporting his observations. These letters were read by Madame Blavatsky, already in New York, and she came at once to Chittenden. Although unconscious then of any outside influence determining his actions, Col. Olcott came to believe that journey and meeting were prearranged by the Masters then planning the T. S. He writes that Madame Blavatsky told him that ". . .in October, 1874, she was ordered to go to Chittenden, and find the man who, as it afterwards turned out, was to be her future colleageue in a great work—myself."

From the date of his return from Chittenden until he embarked for India, an interval of more than four years, Col. Olcott remained in New York, barring a few short local trips, of no special importance. This intervening time was spent in helping H. P. B. prepare the manuscript of "Isis Unveiled" for the publishers, in founding and striving to keep alive the Society, and in learning from his colleague the occult knowledge which should serve as the foundation of his future work in India.

Toward the end of the year 1878 came the welcome summons to India—a summons hailed with joy. For to Col. Olcott it was what the sacred city of Mecca is to the devout Muslim—the land of the spirit, the home of the higher life. He prepared for the voyage with eagerness, and on the 17th of December, with Madame Blavatsky, left America. The passage was a stormy one, full of discomfort, and anxiety. They reached England January 3rd, 1879, and London on the 4th. "We were received," says the diary, " with charming hospitality by Dr. and Mrs. Billing at their suburban home at Norwood Park, which became the rallying center of all our London friends and correspondents. On January 5th, I presided at a meeting of the British T. S., at which there was an election of officers. Our time in London was completely filled with odd and ends of society business, receipts of callers, and visits to the British Museum and elsewhere; the whole spiced with phenomena by H. P. B. and seances with Mrs. Billing's spirit guide, "Ski," whose name is known throughout the whole world of spiritualists." One of the incidents of this London visit which most surprised and delighted Col. Olcott was the meeting of a Master in a crowded street. The Colonel recognized him for an Adept not by reason of having previously seen him, but because of the unmistakably exhalted type of face. On returning to the house he found that the Master had been there, had held a conversation with Madame Blavatsky, and had been seen by Mrs. Billings.

The travelers left England on the 18th, and after another disagreeable month, arrived at Bombay February 16, 1879. Col Olcott's joy on reaching the land of his heart's desire may be guessed from the following passage: "The first thing I did on touching land was to stoop down and kiss the granite step; for here we were at last on sacred ground; our past forgotten, our perilous and disagreeable sea voyage gone out of mind, the agony of long-deferred hopes replaced by the thrilling joy of presence

in the land of the Rishis, the cradle country of religions, the dwelling of the Masters, the home of our dusky brothers and sisters, with whom to live and die was all we could desire." And he concluded the chapter with a sentiment unusual in a man who in middle age has transplanted himself from his own country to one so opposite in ideals and custmos: "And in my case, at least, this feeling has continued down to the present day; in a very real sense to me, they are my people, their country my country." As Ruth said to Naomi, so he to the Masters when he pledged himself to serve them—"Whither thou goest I will go. Thy people shall be my people, and thy Gods my Gods."

After a little delay the Colonel and Madame Blavatsky were comfortably settled in Bombay and soon the interminable journeying began which ended only with the close of Col. Olcott's life. The earlier journeys were taken under conditions which would have discouraged a less determined and devoted man. "If anyone fancies" he writes, "that the influence that our Society enjoys in the East has been gained without hard work, he should look through the pages of this diary. Day after day, week after week, and month after month were journeys taken in all sorts of conveyances, from the railway carriage to the ramshackle little hackery, jutka and akka, drawn by a single pony or bullock; to the common country cart, with its huge wheels, its bottom of bamboo poles, sometimes but thinly covered with straw, and its pair of high-humped Indian oxen straining at their yoke; to roughly built boats covered with arches of dried palm leaves, but with neither bench nor cushion; to elephants carrying us in their howdahs, or, more frequently, on great pads, which are simply mattresses belted about them. Journeys on clear days are recorded here and days of pouring tropical rains; nights of moonlight, starlight and heavy showers; nights, sometimes when sleep is broken by the ear-splitting sounds of the jungle world, the ceaseless shouts of the driver to his lagging bullocks. . . . Then the mosquitos swarming about with their exasperating drone and white lumps swelling on the skin." After enduring this sort of thing for a while patience gave out and his American ingenuity took the matter in hand. A traveling wagon was built which gave him some degree of comfort while on the road.

The first trip after the arrival in India was that to Karli Caves—one of those rock temples of which there are several in India, and described by Col. Olcott as ". . . a fane where, centuries before our ear, thousands of ascetic recluses had worshipped, and with chants of sacred slothas and gathas, united in helping each other to dominate the animal self and develop their their spiritual power." In Fergusson's "Indian Architecture" will be found an extended account of this temple. I append a short extract: "It is certainly the largest, as well as the most complete chaitya cave hitherto discovered in India.....The building resembles an early Christian church, in its arrangements, consisting of a nave and side aisles terminating in an apse and semi-dome round which the aisle is carried.....The interior is as solemn and grand as and interior can well be." Col. Olcott was accompanied on the trip by Madame Blavatsky, Moojie Thackersey and a servant. "I was given to understand" says the colonel, "that we had been invited to Karli by a certain Adept with whom I had close relations in America during the writing of Isis. The party started from Bombay the 4th of August, and remained four or five days. The main feature of this trip was a series of phenomena by H. P. B., for the purpose of convincing Col. Olcott that he was watched over by the Masters. He received instruction through her to go with her to Rajputana and promote Theosophy there. At Karli, also, he met a Sanyasi, who gave him the T. S. secret tokens of brotherhood and whispered in his ear the name of the Adept under whose protection they were, on this trip.

They set out for Rajputana on April 11, returning the of 7th of May. The places visited were Allahabad, Cawnpore, Japmow, Bhutpore, Jeypore, Agra and Saharanpore. The time was spent visiting Sanyasi in the vain attempt to obtain phenomena, in interesting people in their mission to India. They attended a reception given by an India society in their honor and went to a lecture at Meerut, where Col. Olcott lectured in his turn, the subject being "An exposition of the benefits likely to result from a blending of interests and gifts respec-

tively, of the East and the West." On this journey a letter was sent from a Master which felt by the colonel to be of the greatest importance, for he writes, "it pointed out the fact that the surest way to seek the Masters was through the channel of faithful work in the Treosophical Society. That "way" he adds, "I have persistently traveled, and though the had been a false one, it has proved a blessing and perpetual comfort in time of trouble."

Although it was Col. Olcott's rule to refrain from any description of the many interesting places through which he passed, leaving that, as he says, to the guide books, it seems strange, considering his profound interest in Buddhism, that he made no mention of some antique monuments which he could hardly have failed to see at Allahabad. These monuments are the lats of King Asoka. "These lats are strong columns which King Asoka set up throughout his dominions in the thirty-fisrt year of his reign, inscribed with summaries of the leading doctrines of the reformed Buddhist religion, of which he was the author. This remarkable ruler ascended the throne B. C. 260. Seven years later he became a convert to Buddhism, and did for that faith what Constantine did for Christianity: established and endowed it as a state religion. He called a council of leading priests to settle a creed, appointed a state department to control it and watch over its purity, revised the Buddhist scriptures, and inscribed summaries of the creed on rocks, in caves and on stone pillars throughout nis kingdom. There are fourteen rocks, seventeen caves and eleven lats in different parts of Northern India.....The Allahabad pillar is rendered doubly interesting from an inscription added to that of Asoka by Samudra Gupta (A. D. 380) detailing the glories of Asoka's reign." Guide book to Inda. All this is interesting to those who read some time since in the Messenger, that Col. Olcott in a former birth was King Asoka, and who have seen him repeating that monarch's acts in his attempt to reform Buddhism in Ceylon. But the Colonel evidently had no conscious vision of his former exalted station, while at Allahabad. If he did he discreetly kept it to himself.

After a period of activity at home—for Bombay is "home" now—the two Founders fared forth again, this time to visit Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett at Allahabad. Here they crystallized the already existing interest in Theosophy of their hosts. Mr. Sinnett's position as editor of the most influential newspaper in India and assured social status gave opportunity for propaganda work among the English residents. At dinner parties, calls, picnics, and other functions, the seeds were sown. H. P. B. displayed her powers of magic, rang fairy bells and showered the gatherings with phenomenal roses. Col. Olcott gave a lecture on "Theosophy and Its Relation to India." Then came a visit to Benares and more lectures and phenomena. Returning to Allahabad, they were tendered a reception by leading Hindus at the Allahabad Institute, on which occasion the Colonel delivered a lecture, discoursing upon "Ancient Aryavarta and Modern India." The result of all this activity was the stirring of much interest in Theosophy and the addition of three members to the society, two, at least, proving most important acquisitions—Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett.

We now come to a tour which Col. Olcott considered the most important and successful of all—the tour to Ceylon. It had long been urged by the prominent Buddhists on the island, and the Colonel felt that great and momentous issues hung upon the visit. The party started on the journey, and consisted of the two founders, Damodar and three delegates, Parsi and Hindu, from the Bombay Branch, bearers of brotherly greetings to the Sinhalese Buddhists. When before in the history of religion had such a mission been conceived and executed? Not to "convert," but to unite. "We were the first white champions," writes the Colonel, "of their religion, speaking of its excellence and blessed comfort from the platform, in the face of the missionaries, its enemies and slanderers. No wonder the delighted and astonished Buddhists responded instantly with a reception to which only the Colonel's own graphic words can do justice: "On the jetty and along the beach a huge crowd awaited us, and rent the air with the united shout of 'Sadhoo! Sadhoo!' The multitude hemmed in our carriage and the procession set out for our appointed residence. . . . The roads were blocked with people the whole distance. At the house three chief priests received and blessed us. . . . Then we

had a levee and innumerable introductions; the common people crowding every approach and filling every window. This went on all day. Every now and then a new procession of yellow-robed monks came to visit and bless us. It was an intoxicating experience altogether, a splendid augury of our future relations with the nation. . . . Every day was filled to overflowing with lectures and discussions with Buddhist monks and laymen, in tents, halls, temples and groves before wildly enthusiastic audiences." On this tour, as on many in India proper, many of the audiences did not understand English, and the Colonel's remarks reached them only through an interpreter, whose English was none too ready. Some of the experiences arising from this circumstance were annoying and amusing. "I had a trying interpreter that day." Col. Olcott writes of one such occasion. "First of all, he asked me to speak very slowly as 'he did not understand English very well.' Then he planted himself right before me, looking into my mouth, as if he had read Homer, and watched to see what words should come through the fence of my teeth, standing facing me, in a crouching position, his hands clasping his knees. I commanded my dignity with difficulty, as I was forced to see the intense anxiety depicted on his countenance." It was certainly speech-making under difficulties.

How this mission to Ceylon touched the hearts of the common people is shown by the following incident. "We began our journey northward in carriages supplied by the fishermen of Galle, a large, poor, but hard-working caste. Their calling, involving the taking of life, is abhorred among Buddhists, and their social status ranks very low. Yet it seemed that their hearts warmed toward us as much as toward those of their more respectable co-religionists, and, while they shrank from approaching us themselves, in the midst of the high-caste crowd that hemmed us in, they sent us an "humble petition" that I would be graciously pleased to let my "humble petitioners" supply our party with carriages to Colombo. The sincerity of the poor people touched me, and I sent word that I wished to see them. Accordingly, I met a deputation and, wishing to decline putting them to any expense, was met with such an instant protest and appeal that it ended in my accepting their offer with thanks."

It was while on this tour that Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott "took pansil," and were formally acknowledged as Buddhists. This was but a definite confirmation of belief long held, and, indeed, publicly expressed in America, years before. Apropos of this act the Colonel says: "But to be a regular Buddhist is one thing, and a debased, modern, sectarian Buddhist quite another. Speaking for her as well as for myself, I can say that if Buddhism contained a single dogma that were compelled to accept, we would not have taken the 'pansil,' nor remained Buddhists ten minutes. Our Buddhism was that of the Master-Adept, Gautama Buddha, which was incidentally the Wisdom-religion of the Aryan Upanishads, and the soul of all the ancient world-faiths. Our Buddhism was, in a word, a philosophy, not a creed."

Much good was accomplished on this tour. Tolerance and sympathy were established between the two rival factions—the North and South—of Buddhists; members were added to the Theosophical Society and seven Branches were started; and a movement for the founding of Buddhist schools for Buddhist children, was agitated and firmly rooted, coming to fruition later. Colonel Olcott's feeling for the Ceylon Buddhists was a strong one, and he expresses the wish that he might have come among them in his early manhood; had that been possible he felt that he could "have brought about the unification of the Northern and Southern 'churches,' and could have planted a school-house at every cross-road."

The long journey to Ceylon was soon followed by a short trip to Meerut and Simla—at the latter to visit the Sinnets again. The two Founders started from Bombay the 27th of August. They were met at Meerut by the entire local branch of the Arya Samaj and escorted to the house of a member and there held a debate with the president of that organization, Swami Dayamand. Col. Olcott considered this debate of great importance, as in it the Swami declared his belief in the ex-

istence of the Masters and their Brotherhood, as well as the reality of their occult powers. This was valuable as coming from a Hindu who was, as Old Diary Leaves says, ". . . one of the most distinctly Aryan personages of the time, a man of large erudition, an experienced ascetic, a powerful orator and an intense patriot."

Going to Simla, the work was carried on much as when on the first visit to the Sinnets, —through the social life. There were no lectures given, and the results were that some friends were gained for the Society, some enemies made among the Anglo-Indians differing from their point of view, some political troubles, that had hitherto hampered the work, disposed of—on the whole the Colonel decided that the visit was worth while.

The progress homeward from this visit was slow. There were many halts filled with lectures by Col. Olcott and conversazione by Madame Blavatsky. The first stop was at Amritsar, the city which is adorned with that architectural beauty, the Golden Temple of the Sikhs. Here they were the guests of the Arya Samajists, and on the 27th of October the Colonel gave a lecture before this Society on "The Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society." On the 29th another on "The Past, Present, and Future of India." Both lectures were received with deep feeling by his audience. "It was one of those occasions," writes the Colonel, "so frequent in our relations with the Indians, when the bonds of brotherly affection were woven between our hearts, and when we felt we were blessed in being able to come here to live among our spiritual kinsmen."

The next stop was Lahore, where they were greeted warmly by the Samajists and lectures and conferences took place. Here a local Branch was formed, consisting of seven of the Samajists; here, too, they heard an exposition of the beliefs of the Brahmo Samaj. "We had our first to know at first hand the tenets of the Brahmo Samaj," says the Diary. ". . . He (the lecturer) that they take all that is good in the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Bharata and Gita, as well as in Christianity and other religions, and rejects only the dross. They agree with the Christians in their view of man's helplessness and dependence on a personal God. . . . They practice some sort of Yoga and are decidedly following the Bhakta Marga. . . . He spoke of Jesus as something more glorious than any other character of history, yet still a man."

The 17th of November, Col. Olcott made a short visit to Multan, where was a large branch of the Arya Samaj, and also a branch of the T. S., and delivered two lectures.

Before leaving Lahore a local branch was organized under the name of the Punjab Theosophical Society. The two Founders then went to Cawnpore, where long metaphysical discussions were held and two lectures given, after which they returned to their friends, the Sinnets, at Allahabad.

Leaving Madame Blavatsky there, Col. Olcott went to Benares as a guest of the Maharajah, who was most cordial to him and to his ideas. Here he lectured at the Town Hall before an audience composed, as he was told, "of all the aristocracy and learning of Benares," the subject being "India." While in this city he met the Pandit Bala Shastri, considered the greatest Sanskrit scholar in India, Guru of several of the chief princes, and respected by all Hindus. He urged on the Pandit the great value of a revival of the priceless Sanskrit literature for the good of both the Eastern and Western worlds. "I proposed," says the Colonel, "that he and I, as representatives of the Pandit class, on the one hand, and of the world-covering agency of propaganda, on the other, should join forces; I asked him to convene a private meeting of the principal Benares Pandits and let me address them, to which he assented. The meeting was held on the 14th of December, and the Pandits promised to unite with the T. S., so far as the endeavor to promote the spreading of Sanskrit literature and Vedic philosophy were concerned. In the meantime, H. P. B. had arrived and they spent the remaining eight days of the Benares visit occupied with calls from the Maharajah, and others, with talks, private and public lectures. They returned to Bombay by way of Allahabad, stopping again with Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett. Conversations with erudite Sanskritists and lectures to crowded houses filled the time, and on the 28th

of December they started for Bombay—home once more.

It was now decided that another trip should be made to Ceylon, this time for the purpose of gathering a sum of money which would be a firm basis for the establishment of Buddhist schools of Sinhalese children, a project started on the previous tour. Col. Olcott sailed for the island the 23rd of April, 1881, accompanied by a Scottish gentleman, Mr. Bruce, a member of the Society. The Colonel had not been forgotten in Ceylon, and they were received with great enthusiasm. There was a group of intellectual men in Ceylon, who had much power in the two "sects" of Buddhism, and the Colonel's plan was to gain their interest first; that accomplished, the co-operation of the rest of the priests was assured. To bring the sources of influence into harmony, several methods were pursued. Col. Olcott and Mr. Bruce wrote tracts, had them translated into Sinhalese, and, with the approval of the priests, circulated them throughout the Buddhist population. There were personal interviews with the leaders of Buddhism, winning their promises for support. Then came lecturing from village to village, which, with the uncomfortable traveling methods of the country, was an arduous task. And added to these activities, what has proved to be a work of great and lasting value, not only to Buddhists, but to all persons who wish to gain a definite and just knowledge of the doctrines, the "Buddhist Catechism" was compiled. The reasons that prompted this work was the appalling ignorance of the Sinhalese of their own religion, and the fact that no text-book existed. The Colonel spent much time and labor on the book and says that but for his Yankee perseverance he would never have accomplished his object, such were the trials, due to Eeastern indolence, that he had to face. But it was finished and became instantly popular. "The Sinhalese and English versions appeared simultaneously, on the 24th of August, 1881, and thenceforward for some weeks the hand presses of Colombo could not strike off copies fast enough to meet the demand. Sumangala ordered a hundred copies for the priest-pupils of his college; it became a text-book in the schools; found its way into every Sinhalese family; and within one month of its publication was admitted in Court . . . as an authority on the question at issue. It has found such wide favor throughout the world that it has been translated and published in twenty different languages." Old Diary Leaves.

Hearing that a Branch was desired at Tennevelly, in Southern India, the Colonel decided to interrupt his present work for a short space, and go there without delay. He conceived the idea of taking with him a deputation of Buddhist Theosophists, hoping thus to give an object lesson to the new members in the fraternal spirit which he wished to see throughout the T. S. The project was favored by the Sinhalese, and on October 21, the Colonel, with three Buddhist colleagues, set sail. In two days they arrived at Tinnevelly, and were received with great eclat by the Hindus. Priests with the huge Temple elephants, who were made to salute them with a welcoming roar, presentations of the town notables, a long procession accompanied by a tremendous din of trumpeting elephants, tom-toms and shawms. The inauguration of the Branch followed. And the next day came the interesting episode of the planting of a cocoanut by the Ceylon delegates in the Temple yard as a symbol of brotherhood and religious tolerance. There was another procession, an address by Col. Olcott on brotherly love, and the cocoanut was placed in the ground amid loud applause, sprinkled with rose-water and named "Kalpavriksha" for the tree in paradise which gives all men whatever they desire. The day following, the visiting party returned to Ceylon, feeling that the affair had been a pronounced success.

Once again in Ceylon, work on the education fund was resumed. The next fourteen months were occupied with traveling about, lecturing, holding conventions and striving to collect promised money. The work done on this tour was hard and trying in every way; but Col. Olcott felt that the results justified time and trouble. The foundation was laid of a great educational movement, and at the time when the final account of the journey appeared (1896) schools were established everywhere, and 20,000 Buddhist children were being taught in a manner suitable to their race-conditions

and religion. And a strong religious impulse has uplifted the Sinhalese.

The tour following that to Ceylon was northward. Col. Olcott left Bombay, February 17, 1882, and visited Jeypore, Delhi, Meerut, Barcilly, Lucknow, Cawnpore and Calcutta. The program in each of these places was much the same: lectures, new branches formed, new members received. At Calcutta the stay was longer than at other places, and here H. P. B. joined him. They were entertained by the Maharajah, and several Hindu ladies were initiated into the Society. On the 19th of April the two Founders went to Madras, where there was unbounded enthusiasm. From Madras the two colleagues proceeded on their journey in a house-boat, Nellore being their destination. The usual cordial welcome was accorded them here, and every moment was occupied with lectures, discussions, and the entering of candidates for the Society. From Nellore they wen on to Gunter, a tedious ride of three days in jampans, chairs carried by coolies. The heat was terrible, but did not prevent thousands of natives coming to meet them—the whole population of the village turning out. More lectures and conversations, then on the road again for the return to the house-boat. Embarking once more, they went to Mypaud, where the boat was abandoned. The journey was continued by carriage to Nellore, where lectures were given. After three days' stop, bullock carriages were taken to Tiruppati, a distance of seventy-eight miles, and there the train was boarded for Madras. While at Madras the property occupied by the present Headquarters was purchased. Two lectures were given and several new members admitted to the Society, and then, on the 8th of June, the Founders returned to Bombay. This same month (June) an invitation was received and accepted to visit Baroda, where interest in Theosophy was very strong. "We had many visitors, as was usual on our tours, which means that our reception room would be crowded day and evening," writes the Colonel. Two lectures were presented to very appreciative audiences.

The 15th of July finds the Colonel embarking on his third trip to Ceylon, for the purpose of giving a fresh impetus to the education movement. He found the prospect discouraging and fell to work trying to infuse new life into the half-dead T. S. Branches, and reviving the interest in the Fund. A round of villages were visited and sixty-four lectures delivered in three months. It was while on this trip that Col. Olcott begun his psychopathic healing. The healing commenced in a somewhat incidental manner, without any further thought than to help a man who apologized for his small contribution to the Fund on the plea of sickness, stating that he had been a paralytic for years. Whereat the Colonel recalled the lessons in Mesmeric healing with which he had been familiar in his earlier days. So, feeling much sympathy for the man (and later he came to regard sympathy as the chief requisite for success in the art) he made some Mesmeric passes over the man's body. The patient came back in the evening much improved, and the treatment was continued, with the result that in five or six days the man was cured. This was the inauguration of a career of healing which lasted several years and took up a great deal of time and strength on his tours. "As a match to a loose straw," he writes, "the news of the man's healing spread throughout the town and district . . . and in a week my house was besieged by sick persons from dawn until late at night . . . this sort of thing went on, even in the country villages." With practice, his power increased, and he performed some wonderful cures. And without doubt much of the influence he obtained over the Sinhalese and the Hindus was in part due to the exercise of his healing power. Was it not a visible sign—a miracle?—they argued. To him it was no miracle, but only a scientific application of powers possessed by everyone.

Leaving the Branches and Education Fund on a firmer basis than hitherto, Col. Olcott left Ceylon the 1st of November, returning to Bombay to remove the T. S. belongings with Madame Blavatsky's and his own, to their new home in Adyar.

"The year 1885," says Old Diary Leaves, "was one of the busiest, most interesting and successful in the society's history. Forty-

three new branches were organized, the majority in India, and by myself. My travels extended over seven thousand miles, which means much more than it would in the United States, where one has a railway train to take him to any desired place, and has not to shift to the backs of elephants, or have his bones ground together in springless bullock carts." The 17th of February the Colonel started on a long trip, stopping first at Calcutta, where he was entertained at the Guest House Palace of the Maharajah. Here he remained until the 12th of March, and his chief business was the healing of the sick, halt and blind, though he found time for several lectures to crowded houses. Then on to Decca, where lectures and social discussions took up the time. Thence to Darjeeling, where the Calcutta program was repeated. Leaving Darjeeling on the 26th, he went to Jessore, where lectures were delivered and a branch was formed. Then back to Calcutta, where he made himself sick with too continuous work. On again after a short rest to Berhampore, where the Jain members of the T. S. met him with rejoicing. Next to Bhamulpore and Jamalpur, with lecturing and healing; to Durbangha, where his host was the Maharajah, who became a member of the Society, and a lecture given and a branch installed the same program at Ronegunge, and then on to Bankura, where much healing was done and six members admitted. Scarsole, Chakdighiand, Chinsura followed, local branches being formed at each place. Then back to Calcutta. From the 9th until the 14th of May the Colonel remained there, healing and lecturing. Then to the road once more, his point of arrival Midnapore, where a lecture was delivered, sick people healed and a branch started. The 20th of May a lecture at Showanipore, and the 21st, the anniversary of Bengal T. S., was celebrated at Calcutta Town Hall. On the day following, he sailed for Madras.

Receiving word that the Buddhists at Ceylon were in trouble because of an attack of the Catholics, Col. Olcott sailed for Colomba, June 2.. Their difficulties being settled, he set out for a long tour in Southern India. Tinnelly was the first stopping-place. A lecture was given and an appeal made for a fund to establish a good Theosophical library for boys. He was overwhelmed with people begging to be relieved of their ailments, and cured many. A hundred mile ride to Trevandrum in a bullock cart was the next stage of his tour, arriving bruised and weary. A lecture was given here, attended by royal princes, nobles and high officials. Then back to Tinnevelly in the bullock cart "with a rather realizing sense of my anatomy at the end of the journey." On the way he stopped and delivered a lectured at Nagecoil. New members were initiated at Tinnevelly, and the Colonel moved on to Srivilliputtur to install a branch there. Thence to Satturabad and Madura, the latter the largest, most enlightened city in the Madras Presidency. So great was the demand for treatment here the Colonel was obliged to put a committee in charge, letting them select those patients most in need, and have them brought to him in proper order. There were remarkable curse, "in short," he says, "a very respectable stock of 'miracles,' enough, if they had been exploited by an enterprising priest of any religion, to go far to proving to outsiders his holding a special Divine commission: such are the credulous public of every country." It will be seen that the Colonel did not take himself too seriously. Following came Negapatan and Trichinopoli, where things went much the same as at Madura. At Tanjpora, the next halting place, a crowd of people and a band of musicians awaited at the station. Here a lecture and on at once to Kumbakonam, a famous educational center, the "Oxford of Southern India," with a strong mental bias toward materialism. But, in spite of that, the results of the visit were good—"the forming of the now flourishing branch, and the turning of public interest into Hindu religious channels, and the collection of a handsome fund for a local general library. This is, let it be remembered, the year of what is now called the Hindu revival, when forty-three new branches of the T. S. sprang into being, and when the backbone of the Indian movement toward materialism was broken."

Seven thousand people turned out to hear the next lecture, given at Mayaverrum. The

procession to the Temple was led by the Temple elephants, bell-bearing camels, musicians, and every man, woman and child of the place came following after. Notable cures were performed here and a branch started. This program was duplicated at Cuddalore. An unusual compliment was paid the Colonel at this place, a sign of the confidence and good-will of the people. The newspaper report, published at the time, says: "He was taken round the Temple, inside the enclosure, which act, according to Hindu religious belief, forms the sacred pradakshana—a ceremony which hitherto only a Hindu has been allowed to perform. The Arati was then performed by the High-priest, and the blazing camphor offered to the Colonel, and a flower garland placed about his neck." Following this event was a visit to Chingleput, about which no comment is made in the Diary, and the Colonel went to join Madame Blavatsky at Oocatamund, the home of Gen. and Mrs. Morgan.

"THE LESSON OF THE CREED."

"Little Pink Cloudlet, born in the west,
Moving so swiftly, yet seeming at rest,
Pretty wee Fleeceling, formed of the dew,
Quickly advancing through Heaven's deep blue,
Spice-laden, breeze-laden creature of air,
Tinted with sunshine, and fashioned so fair,
What is your mission,—and what is your quest?
What is the secret you bring from the west?"

Softly the answer descends from on high,
Wafted by zephyrs from out of the sky,—

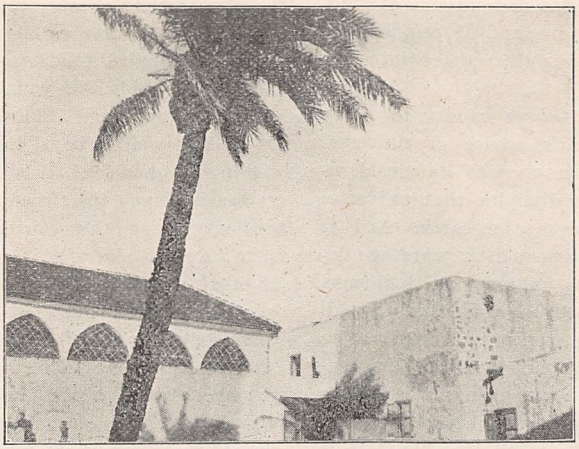
"We clouds live as you do, dear Brother of Earth,
Through alternate cycles of death and of birth;
We ask not God's purpose,— we know not the 'why,'
'Tis enough, that each birth brings us back to the sky!
Descending in showers we water the earth,
Re-ascending, with powers advanced by each birth.
Like souls newly freed from their forms in the sod,
Arising in beauty, we speed back to God;
Glad to be living! Glad to be free!
Glad to return to the sky's azure sea!"

"Thanks, little cloud, for your words from above!
Thanks, for your message of service and love!
Your words are like balm to the earth-prison'd soul,
For—like you—we are parts of the Infinite whole!
Like you, we descend to our labor through birth,
Like you, we ascend through each contact with earth.
Little cloud! Little Brother! your lesson is sweet!
In grateful thanksgiving we kneel at your feet;
No question,—no doubt,—mars the joy that you give,
'Tis enough for your soul, just to love, and to live.
Let us learn that each earth-life, tho' weary and long,
Is a full, precious chord in Eternity's Song,—
The deep diapason of sorrow and grief
Throws the flute-tones of joy into brilliant relief;
By descending through gloom we awake to the light;
And the Glory of Sunrise is born of the night!

The Sun's kiss is warm,—and the Sky's bosom blue
To the little Pink Cloud newly born of the dew,
But the parched Earth is calling for Heaven's sweet showers,
And the cloudlet that lingers,—brings death to the flowers;
So forgetting its fears—and accepting its pain,—
The cloudlet dissolves in the tears of the rain!

By Frederick Finch Strong, M. D.

THE BAHAI REVELATION.



Within a few years overlooking the waters of Lake Michigan is to rise the dome of a temple such as India breathed—classic, enduring. Upon the plans of this temple are engaged the greatest minds of architectural science, striving to express upon the plane of matter the universal requirements of a Revelation.

On the coast of the Great Sea, north of Mount Carmel, in the ancient city of Acca, lives a soul whose light is reaching over the whole world. Carried there a prisoner with his father, forty years ago, Abbas Effendi, then a mere child, has devoted himself these years, to the giving forth of his father's revelation. A prisoner, until very recently liberated by the new government of Turkey, he yet prefers to remain in his prison home, teaching those personally who come to him and writing "tablets" unveiling the word of God.

In the early part of the last century, was born one whom they call the Bab—a John the Baptist, who before his martyrdom in 1850, declared that a Divine Teacher soon would appear, that a Redeemer was about to be manifest, his influence to extend to all mankind. Greater than Confucius, Buddha or Christ, this mission to bring together all religions of the earth.

Suffering intense persecutions, two years after the Bab's death, a band of his followers was exiled from Teheran to Baghdad. Among theme was one Mirza Huessin Ali, a descendant of a house of high lineage, whose family was among the wealthiest of Persia. He had long been reverenced for his character and wisdom and when, some years afterward, he returned from the mountains—whither he had disappeared for two years soon after the arrival at Baghdad—and declared himself to be the Manifestation of God whom the Bab proclaimed, he was accepted with one mind by the larger number of the adherents. So he became known by the name given to him years before by the Bab—Baha'o'llah, meaning the Glory of God. Some years afterwards came the exile to Adrianople and five years later to Acca.

In 1892 Baha'o'llah died, appointing his son, Abbas Effendi, who was peculiarly prepared, to be the center of the movement and the interpreter of his revelation. Abbas Effendi calls himself Abdul-Baha, the Servant of God. The faith today numbers many millions and seems to be spreading above every other religion.

What is it that lies at the heart of this great movement that has the power to attract both the Oriental and Occidental mind alike, and to make itself felt in almost all parts of

the earth? The Bahai will tell you that it is God's Word, the Manifested Spirit of God himself, descended again into a new being, not only to save the world, as did those others who came before, but with the new mission of guiding all religions into one and of bringing together East and West, all peoples into one great family.

We find Baha'o'llah—some twenty to thirty years before the Czar's advice of universal peace had stirred the nations to its consideration—declaring to his disciples that universal peace should reign over the earth. And it was Baha'o'llah who almost fifty years ago declared there should be an universal language, that which today is being considered by all peoples and which is working forward to its fulfillment. The Bahai in less than half a century, is witnessing the stupendous world-plans of an untraveled, imprisoned Oriental unfold before his eyes—little wonder that his faith is strengthened and that the slightest word of the Master is believed and worshiped.

From the inspired look of one who had made the pilgrimage to Acca, as she recalls the days when she slept beneath the roof of Abdul-Baha and saw him in his daily service, we feel the tremendous influence of this man. We see him in the dwelling which so long sheltered him, a prisoner; approached by narrow steps, from tangled shrubbery and worn, battered and uneven by the tread of many feet. Teaching below within the garden flanked by the sea and the ancient fortress-wall of Acca, where men only can hear, this custom being not yet broken. Ascending to the simple, spotless rooms where the pilgrims receive his individual teachings, and then his wisdom-answers while all partake of the evening meal. And we can see him in the mornings of Fridays, near the garden, where he awaits the poor, come to listen to his words and to receive his gifts of food or coin with his benediction!

The "Books of Laws" left by Baha'o'llah, has as yet been translated only in parts, the day is soon to come when a committee composed of Persian and English scholars will work upon the text. Meanwhile there are several translators of extracts, and of the "Tablets" which frequently come from the hand of Abdul-Baha. The following are taken from those of the Persian Consul at Washington, Mirza Ali Kuli Khan.

Of the commands in the "Book of Laws" are the abolishment of war, that all peoples shall meet as the children of one God. All religions are to be studied "that so the heart of each one may be added to your own heart in love and understanding." Education is compulsory, for girls as well as boys, there being no difference in regard to sex. This will have the greatest bearing upon the future of these countries, not only upon the women themselves, but upon the men, who will, in consequence, become more united in thought and feeling to the countries which have felt the influence of women more or less for generations.

There are to be Houses of Justice, to which beyond a certain point all acquired wealth must pay nineteen per cent, as a general fund for education, or for those who, through old age or misfortune have become dependent. Here the trustees of the Houses of Justice will also look after orphans or educate the child whose parents are unable to give it all that it may need. Talents are to be cultivated and used for the work of the Lord.

There are to be no priests nor monks; marriage being encouraged that "children may appear to celebrate the praise of God." It is in this appearance of souls, where lies the principal difference between the teachings of the Bahai and that of Theosophy. Abdul-Baha, if the translations are not misleading, not only does not believe in reincarnation, but that each child born upon the earth is but one more added to the kingdom of heaven; that is, if he is open to union with the Absolute Spirit. Having been once brought into existence, his evolution continues even through the beyond states, though his class is different from that of the Great Teachers, They being of a different mould and especially endowed. Yet we read from Abdul-Baha: "The human spirit is a Divine Trust and it must traverse all conditions; for its passage and movement through the conditions of existence will be the means of its acquiring perfections." We may look for further light upon this subject from this unquestionably great and inspired teacher,

when the translations are more complete. In the meanwhile we shall have no variance. But this matter is of small moment. A large majority of the souls seeking enlightenment would not, under any conditions at present, accept the daunting tenets of reincarnation or would care to be troubled with the complex notions of Theosophy, and there are some, whose definite object it may be, in a given life, is to especially develop that Buddhic quality which would expand most rapidly within the near influence of one who has come into incarnation for that purpose and who may have strong karmic ties with many of those souls who most truly love him.

The main object being to bring humanity to perfection in as short a time as possible, without undue forcing, it would seem that different methods might be employed, even though the teachings in some regards might appear to be in opposition.

For two thousand years the world has looked for the return of Christ. The Bahai Revelation has gathered to it Jew, Mohammedan, Buddhist and Christian, who believe that the Day has been accomplished. In a way, we may very well accept the great Persian reformer, may even kneel at his feet and ask his blessing, as coming from those Greater Ones behind, who guide the evolution of mankind in divers ways. So let us clasp hands with the Bahai, who believes also in the brotherhood of man, and also believes that the world is never left without its teachers, inbreathed by the great pulse of the Divine.

Harriet Tooker Felix.

A LOTUS..

Thy curling ivory petals joined together
Form a chalice jeweled. Topaz-set
A golden-dusted stem stands as thy heart;
Very image of God's universe, chaste form,
thou art!

Yesterday thou wert so pure, so fair!
Now formless, drooped, thy colors lost!
Mourn we thy sweet life; lost thine imagery,
Now but dull rags thy former drapery..

Not so sings forth a Voice within!
That stem shall hold forth seeds,
Life strong and pure spring up from them therein,
Odorous new forms rock with the waves again!

W. V-H.

PROPAGANDA.

Out of the belief that through books the best thoughts and feelings of man may be recorded and conveyed to others, almost untold millions have been expended in this land in the establishment of free public libraries, to the end that the benefits to be derived from books may be as general as possible. So it transpires that we have selected collections of books easily accessible to probably eighty or ninety million people of the United States and Canada.

No literature extant contains so much soul food for us westerners as some few hundred theosophical books that have been prepared for that special purpose. Some few of these should be in even the smaller libraries, and their use will create the demand that will bring others.

No thoughtful theosophist can look back, remembering what a flood of light some book brought into his present incarnation, and how it linked his past knowledge to his present life, without feeling a deep responsibility and an obligation towards those who have not yet seen the light, or are seeking more light by searching in books.

The time has come when we, as a body, can cooperate in an effective and altogether dignified manner with the whole public library scheme of the land.

It is the belief of the writer that in three years of constant well-directed effort we can be rendering efficient help completely over the following territory: Atlantic Coast region, Virginia to Canada, inclusive; farther west, Pennsylvania to Canada, inclusive; part of Kentucky to Canada; Missouri, Kansas, and north; the great state of California; while important centres can be reached in Oklahoma, Texas, and all the western states, Colorado, Utah, Montana, etc. The writer presents the following plan of organization and work in the hope that all lodges will give it consideration, and have their delegates to the next convention prepared to give expression to their thoughts when propaganda is being discussed, whether in committee or open convention.

The Propaganda Committee of the American Section should have one person assigned especially to this work, acting under instruction sufficiently general and elastic enough not to hamper the worker who would report and consult with the general committee from time to time, as seems expedient. Such a worker should have a published address in the printed list of officials of the section, and it should be in the hands of all lodge secretaries. This party should be the focus through which everything passes from lodge to lodge, and between lodges and the general commander and general secretary of the section. He should distribute catalogues, circulars, and instructions, and receive all reports of methods of work and suggestions from lodges, so that all may have full benefits of all work done, an underlying unity and uniformity of method prevail, and the whole work have a centre of life. He should have a definite hour every day in which he drops out of his ordinary life and takes up his official life and duties, surrounded by his carefully arranged files of papers, etc., which, together with any necessary funds should be kept entirely distinct from all other affairs. After a few minutes of silence, he should take up his routine work, answering correspondence, filling requests for blanks, lists, circulars, etc. When routine work is over the remainder of the time should be spent in reviewing what has been done, and in meditation and contemplation of the work in hand.

It is hardly necessary to point out the great responsibility and importance of such a position and why the official hour should be fully consecrated to the work and followed out as regularly as an important public engagement. Outside the official hour the mind should revert to the work whenever opportunity offered.

Lodge Organization: The lodge should have a committee of three, one of whom it is distinctly understood is the working member, the other two acting in an advisory and consulting capacity. It would be desirable to have some of the following officers on this committee, president, vice-president, secretary, and librarian. The working member may be one of these or not, according to circumstances. The working member should have an official

hour at least once a week, which should be given entirely to the work without interruption. This may possibly be during the forenoon of Sunday, if the remainder of the week is too much engaged. After having been assigned to the work and given general instructions as to territory, methods of work, etc., he should at first devote himself to studying the profession of librarian and the methods of library management, rules, etc., and in learning his territory, that is, getting in touch with librarians and others likely to be helpful. He should also use much of his time extending continuously his familiarity with T. S. literature. Very complete catalogues of T. S. books will soon be available and larger stocks of books carried than heretofore. No library should be left in ignorance as to what T. S. literature is available, nor where it is to be obtained, nor left in doubt as to the special value and purpose of the principal books. Where libraries are well endowed, the demand for T. S. books should be learned and the prescribed means for providing them used. When libraries are very limited in funds, quite inexpensive books can be donated, as a seed, to create a demand that can be met later.

When a band of united and earnest workers are fully established in this field, innumerable ways for useful work will be found and developed by them. The Theosophic Book Corporation and The Rajput Press will give resources not now possessed. The result of the work will be cumulative, and in a few years can be made a mighty engine. If half the lodges in the land take up this work, and a member devotes one hour per week, it would equal the entire service of one person, at least, and one person added to the workers means much, and much means more as it gathers momentum.

By convention time, let us build a well-vitalized, well-formed mental body for this work. E. Holbrook.

THE MASONIC MOVEMENT.

The wise Theosophist recognizes that all methods of hastening the world's evolving out of its dark places and periods ought to be used by us as they become most easily available and potent. As cycles are run and new eras approach, we must be ready to take advantage of them. We have been specially told by Mr. Leadbeater that our relations with the devas are to be closer, and the greater beings of that evolution are rejoicing in the approach of the day when they may aid us and we them as it has never yet been our privilege to do.

Now the ritualistic form of worship is effective by calling into action the spiritual forces of nature through the aid of the great devas. And the cycle is at hand in which this work can be done to far greater advantage. Hence the Masonic movement will receive an immense impetus and great stores of spiritual force are being discharged and will be discharged by the Masters through their servants into this channel.

It therefore behooves the thinking Theosophist who is also trying to make use of his spiritual power to send a part of his forces through the Masonic movement. Each morning there rises to heaven from Theosophists here in America, a great wave of spiritual force. From East to West it travels with the growing day. Join the wave, add to it, make it swell with rejoicing to the Most High, the mighty Master, the Grand Architect of the Universe. W. V.-H.

AVICHI AND THE EIGHT SPHERE.[1]

Quite recently, while dwelling in thought upon some of the problems of evil in our world —those specially arising from greed and selfishness—by a rather unusual succession of ideas, my mind turned to the subject of avichi, lost souls and the eighth sphere. Suddenly there arose before me an astral picture of a rocky cliff, much resembling a precipitous pass in the mountains of Switzerland, except that there was no beautiful surrounding landscape —nothing but rocky waste and endless space. In an isolated niche of the rocks I saw a huge creature with a sort of half-animal, half-human form.

At first glance I thought it to be an elemental—sometimes one sees such in astral plane work—and supposed that there must be something to be done in connection with it, perhaps to help some person who was frightened by it, or to assist in disintegrating it, as the case might be. But it was soon evident that the vision was being shown me by a higher plane Teacher, one to whom I owe a profound debt of gratitude for the instruction he has so often given me. He pointed out that I was being shown one of the types of disintegrating personalities, that of a black magician cut off from the Ego. He suggested that I try to place myself slightly in touch with its consciousness in order that I might understand what had led to such a condition of existence.

The thought of uniting one's consciousness, even for only a moment, with that of such a creature, created within one a feeling of deep repulsion, but on continuing to regard it, the feeling passed and one began to sense a growing interest in it; one soon felt riveted to the spot by its wild yet penetrating glance—a glance that had in it an unholy sense of power, yet at the same time expressing helpless, mute despair. Even though one's consciousness was unable in any recognized way to mix with that of such a being, one felt in some mysterious way a part of it (though quite separate) and able not only to analyze what it was feeling, but also to know what was passing in its mind.

Presently there began to spread before me a long series of pictures, disclosing the past lives of the creature, those lived at the time when it was still attached to the Ego. One incarnation after another was passed in purely selfish living, and they were also mixed with crimes of the lowest nature; as time went on the Ego was subjected to some severe tests as to its capacity to indulge in or resist evil. These were mostly lives in Atlantis, and the man entered into some of the degrading orgies of black magic, in fact he often led them as a priest of the black art, at the time when the use of human sacrifice was prevalent as well as magic of the sensual order, too horrible to realize. He did not respond to any opportunities offered to turn to the Path of spiritual progress, thus delaying his advancement, and so degrading the personality as to lead it directly on to the path of final extinction.

It seemed very merciful that now and then the karmic deities would allow a life to be passed where he would be brought into contact with ascetics or priests who tried to teach him of the error of his ways—all to no purpose. At one time it was permitted him to receive teaching from even a Great One when he was preaching to the "souls in prison," who told him that if he still persisted in evil, that there would come a time when, by natural law, the divine part of him must of necessity be severed from the lower, and as a result, he would be forced to wander as a soulless creature, perhaps not be able to reincarnate but once or twice more, even then in a most degraded body, as only such could express his depravity; then finally it would be necessary to transport him astrally from this planet into complete isolation, a place where amid vain struggles to "keep alive" and in great suffering he would at last "go out."

But the man would not listen, nor would he even believe the teaching given, but became even still more desperate and depraved. Sometimes when the memory of this warning would come to him to haunt him, he would harden himself deliberately and rebelliously against it; an inconceivably demoniacal look of hatred

[1] From The Theosophist.

would pass over his face, and he would entertain feelings of revenge towards the Great One who had so compassionately tried to assist him to a better life.

It now seemed practically hopeless that the man would ever turn to the path of Progress, for the lives grew more bestially evil than ever—lower and lower, downwards and outwards until one could see that at last he had lost even the sense of right or wrong. It is at this time that one suspects the separation from the higher must have taken place. Apparently he must have had a sort of sub-conscious realization that he was now ceasing to live, for he began in a desperate way to search out victims to vampirize, drawing their vitality to help him go on, sometimes he was even attached to animals—perhaps in this way he was able to obsess the dreadful elemental form he now wore. Then there followed soon after this a time when he was transported entirely from this planet of ever-increasing life, and was carried to the astral plane of the disintegrating moon, a part of it that is cut off entirely from any connection whatever with this earth, and the place where he was shown to be in the vision.

During the long ages of practicing black magic and of evil doing he had made himself strongly vitalized lower bodies, and probably did not realize the moment when he was cut off from the higher part of himself—the Ego. In that strongly built lower form he was able to function sufficiently well during the time yet left to him to exist on this planet, and in it had stored up a large amount of will of the baser kind. One would naturally suppose that such a body would be surrounded with an aura in a violent state of agitation, but this was not the case; on the contrary, the astral and mental bodies were scarcely recognizable as such, and looked heavy, sluggish, ill-defined and vicious. When he used his will, there oozed from him polluting, murky matter of a most objectionable kind, and one felt as though one were looking into a dark cave where some foul, slimy monster breathed out a miasmatic effluvium.

Now let us turn to the Ego that had previously for so long a time been attached to this creature.

There has been confusion in the minds of some concerning the state known as Avichi and the place called the eighth sphere. It is the Ego alone that can experience Avichi (except in very exceptional cases, where it is possible for a personality to experience it for a brief space of time) and it is a state of consciousness that can be realized in any place. But the eighth sphere is a place where a disintegrating personality is exiled when it is cut off from the Ego entirely, and at present we know that it is, as before stated, a region in the astral plane of the moon.

Generally, only a very small part of the true Ego of the man is put down upon the mental, astral and physical planes when he is in incarnation in the physical body; in proportion as the ear is to the whole physical body, so is the small part of the Ego generally put down into the personality, as compared to the Ego itself. The latter remains on his own plane, the causal, and his only touch with the planes below him is through the experiences of the personality in which are the permanent atoms. Since up to this time the personality mentioned has only been experiencing lives in which virtues have been absent, the permanent atoms can only express evil tendencies. But it is not so much that these tendencies (natural to the early stages of evolution), are in these atoms, but there is a complete absence of the opposite virtues in the causal body, consequently the evil below has nothing from above to counteract it.

Now in the case cited, the Ego had been quite indifferent to the experiences of the personality, during the earlier stages, and when the time came at which the personality was indulging in magic and crimes of an intellectual nature, he began to take more interest in them and even to share in them; from this he developed the evil qualities possible to an Ego—such as love of power, intellectual pride and selfishness, etc. Then suddenly it realized that the personality had become so vile that it was in danger of being cut off, and he then began

to put more and more of the better part of himself down to turn it to better things; but it was too late, for not only was the personality cut off, but the Ego lost all of itself that had been put down, and since his only touch with the outer world was through that part of himself, he was plunged into avichi, maimed and weakened, with no further progress possible for ages to come. We can conceive the conditions of avichi as being analogous to that of Devachan, in that both are, in a certain sense, a separated condition of consciousness; the difference between the two lying in the experiences of both—the events that have made either possible. Devachan is a state of unity and love, resulting from good; avichi is a state of separateness and selfishness resulting from evil; in Devachan the person cuts himself off from evil—in avichi, from good.

While watching the series of lives of the creature above described a wonderful fact disclosed itself, showing how the Law of Love governs even the regions where one would suppose that its influence would be nullified by the apotheosis of evil. We have been taught that at a certain period on the downward arc of involution, we reach a stage where we stop our descent and begin to climb upwards on the nivritti marga, and that the aspirant, by cultivating the expression of the divine virtues, forms within himself centres which respond to the magnet of their archetype in the Supreme. As a large magnet attracts smaller object, so will the supreme virtues draw the smaller ones into themselves; and in just such great measure as the latter exist in us, is our progress towards unity accelerated. But the startling fact was disclosed that even when a soul is destitute of virtue, and is without and beyond the lowest point of the descending arc, it cannot force itself out of the current of divine force, for even there he is compelled to resist deliberately a mighty power which acts as an indrawing power to the Supreme. It seems as though the deeper and deeper one sinks into evil ways, and the further from the Divine one goes, the more strength of will must one exert in order to resist that all-compelling, irresistible power—His loving protection.

We know that the crimes of the lower sort, such as those indulged in by the savage and the undeveloped, ordinary man, do not reflect any harm to the causal body because they are those finding expression on the lower mental, astral and physical planes. But when the man has reached a stage such as that of the black magician, as said before, one having great mental power, pride, and selfishness of an intellectual sort, then there is a certain amount of harm to the causal body because these lower qualities build into it matter that is not plastic, and of a deep orange color, which erects a sort of separating, inpenetrable wall; in so far as the individual consciousness of the man is concerned it is isolated, constricted and selfish. When the personality is at last cut off, the Ego must dwell in its awful isolation —in avichi—until that separating matter or body around it has disintegrated—worn away by ages of time; then only will it be possible for it to reappear, and by putting down more of itself on the lower planes, create a new personality. It will probably make a more determined effort this time towards the path of progress, having realized that its advancement depends absolutely upon itself and having suffered much from its former mistakes.

The Monad is not yet active on its own plane and will not be so (except in very exceptional cases) until the time has come when the Ego is sufficiently advanced to enter the Path Proper; then it begins to unite its efforts little by little with the Ego until it (the Monad) is able to draw up into itself all the essence of the experiences and virtues in the personality and the Ego. When the Ego has evolved to the lofty stage of Adeptship, then the complete unity of the lower man with the Monad must have taken place and, in the higher evolution possible to those exalted Beings, will finally be able to attain unity with the Supreme.

The vision described above and the reflections upon it, not unnaturally made me revert to the thoughts that had brought it about. It seemed to me for a few moments that the Logos Himself had made these evil conditions possible, since He was responsible for all as the author of our system. "How do you know that evil, as such, exists?" enquired the voice

of the Teacher. "Fire is potentially one of the life-giving sources of the universe, yet would you blame the Logos who created it, if a person by accident or in ignorance, burnt himself with it? Know that evil, as such, does not exist, and that all things happen individually and collectively for the good of the world. Things seem evil only because of ignorance. As soon as a person has the higher wisdom he will see that in the mental attitude of man lies the origin of what the world calls evil—the source for which, has been through centuries so vainly sought. For long ages man's reason must be of necessity focussed from below instead of from above, consequently things must appear distorted to those who constitute themselves judges of that which, with limited vision, they cannot understand."

If we reason from this standpoint, it is easy to see that it is not for us to try to sit in judgment upon the enigmas of the world around us, for we will have enough to do to judge ourselves. After all, the Logos must be perfectly capable of conducting His universe and caring for His people. His love streams "alike on the just and on the unjust," and if we were not creatures of free-will, would we not be mere automata? One of the Masters has said that all ought to be judged from the pinnacle of a pure and controlled mind; since wisdom is the power which enables us to control our minds (giving us discrimination), that is the goal for which we should strive; then we shall not judge from appearances, but understand that "all is well with the world." Refusing to acknowledge that ought is evil, let us unite faith with our reason, realizing that since the Logos is in Himself the ultimate good, He cannot but conduct His system for good.—Helios.—From Theosophist.

SUDDEN LIGHT.

I have been here before,
  But when or how I cannot tell:
I know the grass beyond the door,
  The sweet keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

You have been mine before,—
  How long ago I may not know:
But just when at that swallow's soar,
  Your neck turned so,
Some veil did fall,—I knew it all of yore.

Has this been thus before?
  And shall not thus time's eddying flight
Still with our lives our love restore
  In death's despite,
And day and night yield one delight once more?

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

THE CENTRE OF MY CIRCLE.

Of all the many obstacles that stand in the way of the aspirant who wishes to enter upon the Path the most serious, because the most far-reaching and fundamental, is self-centredness. Note that by this I do not mean the crude and ugly selfishness, which definitely seeks every thing for itself even at the cost of others. I am of course supposing that that at least has been left behind long ago. But in those who have left it behind there still lingers this other evil—so subtle and so deeply rooted that they do not recognize it as an evil at all—indeed they are not even aware of its existence. But let a man examine himself honestly and impartially, and he will find that all his thought is self-centred; he thinks often of other people and of other things, but always in their relation to himself; he weaves many imaginary dramas, but he, himself, occupies always a prominent role in them. To change so fundamental a quality is to change for him the root of all things, to make himself into an altogether different man. Most people cannot for a moment face the possibility of such a radical change, because they do not even know that the condition exists.

Now this condition is absolutely fatal to any kind of progress. It must be utterly changed, and yet so few are making any attempt to change it. There is one way out of this vicious circle, and only one, and that is the way of love. That is the only thing in the life of the ordinary man which ever alters this condition for him, which seizes upon him with a strong hand and for the time being alters his whole attitude. For a time at least when he falls in love, as it is called, some other person occupies the centre of this circle, and he thinks of everything in all the world in its relation to her, and not in its relation to himself. The divinity at whose shrine he offers this worship may in truth seem to the rest of the world to be but a very ordinary person, but for him at least, she is temporarily the incarnation of grace and beauty; he sees in her the divinity which is in truth hers, because it lies latent in all of us, though normally we do not see it. It is true that in many cases after a time his enthusiasm fades and he transfers it to another object, but nevertheless, for the time he has ceased to be self-centred, for the time he has had a wider outlook.

Now, this which the ordinary man thus does unconsciously, the student of occultism must do consciously. He must deliberately dethrone himself from the centre of the circle of his life and he must enthrone the Master there instead. He has been in the habit of thinking instinctively how everything will affect him, or what he can make of it, how he can turn it to his profit and pleasure. Instead of that he must now learn to think of everything as it affects the Master, and since the Master lives only to help the evolution of humanity, that means that he must regard everything from the standpoint of its helpfulness or hindrance to the cause of evolution. And though at first he will have to do this consciously and with a certain effort, he must persevere until he does it just as unconsciously, just as instinctively as heretofore he centred everything around himself. To use the words of a Master, he must forget himself utterly, only to remember the good of others.

But even when he has dethroned himself and enthroned the work which he has to do, he must be exceedingly careful that he does not delude himself, that he does not return to the old self-centredness in a subtler form. Many a good and earnest Theosophical worker have I known who committed this very mistake, who identified Theosophical work with himself and felt that anyone who did not exactly agree with his ideas and his methods was an enemy of Theosophy. So often the worker thinks that his way is the only way, and that to differ from him in opinion is to be a traitor to the cause, and this means only that the self has crept skilfully back into its old place in the centre of the circle and that the work of dislodging it must be begun all over again. The only power which the disciple should desire is that which makes him seem as nothing in the eyes of men. When he is the centre of his circle he may do good work, but it is always with the feeling that he is doing it, even largely with the object that it may be he that does it, but when the Master is the centre of his circle

he will do the work simply in order that it may be done. The work is done for the sake of the work, and not for the sake of the doer. And he must learn to look upon his own work precisely as though it were that of someone else, and upon the work of someone else precisely as though it were his own. The one thing that is important is that the work should be done. It matters who does it. Therefore he ought neither to be prejudiced in favor of his own work and unduly critical of that of another, nor be hypocritically depreciatory of his own work in order that others may praise it. To quote the words of Ruskin with regard to art, he ought to be able to say serenely, "Be it mine or yours or whose else it may, this also is well."

Another danger there is too, which is special to the Theosophical worker—the danger of congratulating himself too soon that he differs from the rest of the world. Theosophical teaching puts a new complexion on everything, so naturally we feel that our attitude is quite different from that of most other people. There is no harm in thinking this obvious truth, but I have found that some of our members are apt to pride themselves upon the fact that they are able to recognize these things. It does not in the least follow that we, who find ourselves able to recognize them, are therefore better than others. Other men have developd themselves along other lines, and along those lines they may be very far in advance of us, though along our own line they lack something which we already have. Remember, the adept is the perfect man who is fully developed along all possible lines, and so while we have something to teach these others, we also have much to learn from them, and it would be the height of folly to despise a man because he has not yet acquired Theosophical knowledge, nor even perhaps the qualities which enable him to appreciate it. Therefore, in this sense also, we must take care not to be the centre of our own circle.

A good plan that you may adopt in order to keep yourself from slipping back into the centre may be to remember, as I have before explained to you with regard to the occult view of the course and infiuence of the planets. You remember how I explained to you that each planet was a minor focus in an eclipse, the major focus of which was within the body of the sun. You are like that minor focus. You are going upon your own course and doing the work appointed to you, and yet all the time you are but a reflection of the major focus and your consciousness is centred within the sun, for the Master of whom you are a part, is a member of the Great Hierarchy which is ever doing the work of The Logos.

While a man is the centre of his own circle, he is perpetually making the mistake of thinking that he is the centre of everybody else's. He constantly supposes that in everything which other people say or do they are somehow thinking of him, or aiming their remarks at him, and with many this becomes a kind of obsession, and they seem totally unable to realize that each of their neighbors is as a rule, also entirely wrapped up in himself and not thinking of them at all. So the man makes for himself a great deal of totally unnecessary trouble and worry, all of which might be avoided if he would but see things in a sane and rational perspective. Again it is because he is the centre of his own circle that he is liable to depression, for that comes only to one who is thinking of himself. If the Master be the centre of his circle, and all his energies are centred upon serving Him, he has no time for depression, nor has he the slightest inclination towards it. He is far too eagerly wishing for work that he can do.

His attitude should be that indicated by our president in her autobiography—that when a man sees a piece of work waiting to be done he should say, not as the ordinary man usually does, "Yes, it would be a good thing, and somebody ought to do it, But why should I?"—but rather he should say, "Somebody ought to do this. Why should it not be I?"

As he evolves, his circle will widen and in the end there will come a time when his circle will be infinite in extent, and then in a sense he, himself, will again be its centre, because he has identified himself with the Logos, who is the center of all possible circles, since every point is equally the centre of a circle whose radius is infinite.

C. W. Leadbeater.

THEOSOPHICAL WORK—SOME SUGGESTIONS.

In that wonderful little book, "The Voice of the Silence," wherein a disciple of Aryasongha gathered together the words of wisdom and advice that his master gave out for use of "the few" who would aspire to become occultists, occur the following words:

"If sun thou canst not be then be the humble planet."

It is on these words that I would hang the several suggestions I would put before you today for your consideration, in the hope that some of them may be found to be worthy of adoption.

You have all read or heard reports of Mrs. Besant's recent lectures, in which the dominant note is that the time for a new spiritual outpouring is very near; in which she tells us all quite clearly that exceptional opportunities are afforded to all who will work heart and soul, exceptional knowledge and hints are being given out openly because of the work that is to be done and because of the change that is to be wrought in men's minds,—in the attitude of opinions in general,—prior to the coming of a Great Teacher and many disciples who will strike a new note and give the new teaching which shall form the basis for religion and thought for centuries to come.

That this is true, many of us who have been in daily, constant contact with our teachers, the president and Mr. Leadbetter and others who are growing in the spiritual atmosphere of Adyar, can attest because we have realized it every day here more and more; and we have felt how much there is yet to be done in our various sections, so that there may be some chance that when the Teacher does come He may not find barren intellectual soil, but rich fields, plowed by earnest thought and tilled by hands that loved the work of preparing the ground for the good seed whereby their Master might reap an abundant harvest.

Now that is what we want in each section; we want each lodge and each member to become not passive sympathizers or academical students, but active and enthusiastic and whole-hearted workers for a cause they love, for an ideal they would attain.

The subject, I know, is so vast, the work to be done so various and so great, that many do nothing because they do not know where to begin or are diffident as to their powers.

The object of this paper is to try to show how all can find some work to do, some individual help to give, if their heart is in the thing. And to the diffident I would say, "If sun thou canst not be, then be the humble planet." For the lukewarm I fear I can say little that is polite; in the Bible it is said, "the lukewarm I will spue out of my mouth," and while I do not quote these words at them, I rather feel that there is so much to do for and with those who are really earnest or anxious to learn, that one has not much time to waste on those who want to criticise and discuss and temporize and so forth. One can only hope that something or other may sometime persuade them to see things clearly one way or the other and that they will either join wholeheartedly with us or clear out of the way, which evidently is not yet suited for them, and on which they only serve as stumbling blocks and delays for those who have seen their goal and wish to reach it.

Before I come to my own suggestions as to how to help, let me quote to you what H. P. Blavatsky says in her "Key to Theosophy," (page 167, English Edition).

Q. "How do you expect the fellows of your society to help in the work?"

A. "First, by studying and comprehending the theosophical doctrines, so that they may teach others, especially the young people. Secondly, by taking every opportunity of talking to others and explaining to them what Theosophy is and what it is not; by removing misconceptions and spreading an interest in the subject. Thirdly, by assisting in circulating our literature; by buying books when they have the means; by lending and giving them and by inducing their friends to do so. Fourthly, by defending the society from unjust aspersions cast upon it by every legitimate device in their power. Fifth, and most important of all, by the example of their own lives."

All this practically covers in main headings what I shall have to say, but as the next question rather completes the first and also touches a point which is so often so mistakenly understood, I will continue the quotation.

Q. "But all this literature, to the spread of which you attach so much importance, does not seem to me of much practical use in helping mankind. This is not practical charity."

A. "We think otherwise. We hold that a good book which gives people food for thought, which strengthens and clears their minds and enables them to grasp truths which they have dimly felt but could not formulate—we hold that such a book does a real substantial good. As to what you call practical deeds of charity, to benefit the bodies of our fellowmen, we do what little we can. But as I have already told you, most of us are poor, whilst the society itself has not even the money to pay a staff of workers. All of us who toil for it, give our labor gratis, and in most cases money as well. The few who have the means of doing what are usually called charitable actions, follow the Buddhist precepts and do their work themselves, not by proxy or by subscribing publicly to charitable funds. What the Theosophist has to do above all is to forget his personality."

Leaving them on one side, what H. P. B. says in this second question which concerns our subject less nearly for the moment, though very important in itself, we can now turn to the means of helping in Theosophical work—the only means whereby a man has any right to call himself a Theosophist or to realize the privilege of being a member of the T .S.

No amount of reading of books, no amount of swallowing second-hand information, no amount of years in the registers of the society will constitute a man a Theosophist. It is the amount of theosophy that is in him, in his daily life, in his thoughts, words and deeds, in his aims, in the unselfish and loving qualifications that he possesses and puts into action, that constitute his privilege to that proud title.

Many say, "I would willingly help, but I do not know enough, etc., etc." That is true with some, but evidently only a few are qualified to teach—only those who have studied most and experienced most. But teaching is only one part of the work. Before seed is sown a field must be cleared of weeds and tangle and overgrowth from previous crops that have occupied the ground, have grown to maturity and have declined and decayed. After that the ground has to be plowed, perhaps more than once, then the small seeds at the propitious seeason can be sown, and if watered and nurtured carefully and constantly, will in due season bring forth tender shoots. These again must be allowed to ripen through the alternating periods of light and darkness, and through the successive seasons of the year until finally the ripe ear bears fruit which in turn will multiply and bring forth an hundredfold.

But the early period of preparing the soil takes many workers and it is this especially which is now required. There is little use in throwing handfuls of good seed out of season onto barren and unprepared ground in a very promiscuous and unmethodical manner.

Now, a lodge must be dynamic, not static. Just as every individual theosophist hopes to be a channel for force, so every lodge, "a portion," should be so. A lodge or an individual, that does not give out continually all it can, gets no force and has no force. One that does, not only has more force than it ever gives, but grows more and more in strength which it receives and is able to pass on in all directions.

It is just as with any other physical law of growth; in proportion as you can stand a strain and utilize the force, so do you receive and are fit to receive an ever-increasing proportion. The same is true in our bodies, in our minds, in our meditation, in our supernormal states, and in our meetings.

I will now try to proceed to show how everyone in some way or other, who cares at all sincerely for Theosophy, can help. I fear you may find it rather disjointed, but I have to take examples as they occur as the field is rather large.

Now the three objects of the society can be roughly divided into (a) Brotherhood—that is to say, all that concerns acting and serving on behalf of the human family, and a proper understanding of the reason of the differences therein. (b) Study, that is all that concerns the thought side of human activities. (c)

Occultism, that is all that concerns the higher and unrevealed nature and powers of man in the life, and the qualities that are the essence and resultant of his experiences,

The reason why so many theosophists fail to do any real work on behalf of theosophy and theosophical movement is, as I said before, because they want to do so many things that they end by doing nothing. We each of us are blessed or cursed with different temperaments. Now this should be for us the first of the several indications in what branch of theosophical activity we may find a useful and productive place. We must choose our work.

If, for instance, one is very keen on the outer activities of theosophy, on various good and beneficent schemes connected with the "order of service," let him or her stick to that and do it well, rather than attempt to do a little of that, and a little of discourse on Rings and Rounds and other cosmic processes of our Manvantara as detailed in the Secret Doctrine, for this is the work of another, viz., the student.

"Better is a man's own Dharma though destitute of merit, than the Dharma of another well discharged." Bhag Gita III. 35.

So many people who would be invaluable helpers in the theosophic field if they only specialized in however a humble sphere, are rendered not only valueless but heavy clogs on those who do work by the fact of doing nothing because they wanted to do too much, or do not know where to begin.

After all, the work is all one, we are all one in the eyes of the Master. So long as the work is done it doesn't matter who does it, only it must be done. We have each of us now the opportunity of filling some place, of doing some little work, of preparing to some small extent the ways of Him who is to come. But be sure if we don't take our opportunities and do what is expected of us, somebody else will. The plan will not fail because we fail. It will merely be someone else who will have the privilege and opportunity which is offered, and those who don't take it will realize when it is too late, as so many of our brothers, who in a hasty moment were glamoured, are now realizing.

Now let me come to some quite practical suggestions from which individually each can choose what he will, as work that lies in his power to do. Once more I would remind you that the activity of a section is not created by the decisions or initiative of its executive committee or of its general secretary, very helpful and important as they may be, but by the individual who works sincerely and wholeheartedly and harmonically with others at what he or she thinks useful or good, and offer all they do to and for Theosophy. For instance:

1. Literary activities. Every lodge should have a library. You can start it with quite a small sum and buy all the principal books on theosophy. These can then be gradually supplemented with others as funds and occasion allow. Many members living in the same town already possess books. They might establish a room in common and each contribute some books. Then one should put up a notice of the books that are wanted, and so little by little, accumulate. It should all be considered in a practical manner, and arranged practically. Never forget that H. P. B. and Col. Olcott after spending all they had for starting the Society in America, landed in India alone, practically without funds or powerful friends. They were soon suspected of being spies and worse, and were standing for truths that were not easily mentioned at that materialistic age, yet they built up this world-wide Society.

So let no one plead want of funds. If the will is strong and the desire genuine, the lodge room can be acquired and the library established. If the love for theosophy and its teachings be strong enough, and the desire to help others be really a potent motive, no valid excuses can hold for not creating the meeting room and possessing the "food to give to the hungry" in the shape of books and writings and thoughts. The rooms should be nicely arranged, should possess plenty of diagrams, be kept scrupulously clean, to induce good magnetism; no smoking should ever be allowed, and no loud arguing or discussions permitted. They should be places set apart for the quiet thought upon all that theosophy means, and capable of giving strength and resolve to all who come there. They should be cheerful, clean places.

field of study and thought, in the field of research and higher konwledge and developing of qualifications, much has yet to be done.

Every library ought to have, every lodge ought to possess, a complete set of the sectional organ, and be regular subscribers as well to the "Theosophist," the official organ of the president and of headquarters, without which, no lodge can be truly said to be in touch with the Theosophical movement. Those who know foreign languages should arrange to offer themselves to translate or explain contents of the foreign T. S. periodicals to those who don't. There is always much each month that is useful for members to talk about and know about, and they thus form mental links with the general thought of what is going on in the Theosophic world. These mental links are more important than people would suppose, for it helps them to establish communications and connections when out of the body in sleep at night.

2. Here is another point: Members should make it a habit whenever they pass booksellers to enquire if they have any theosophical books, and, if not, to either make a note of it and try to remedy the deficiency, or to suggest to the bookseller that they are books that have a sale and furnish him with catalogues of the Theosophical publishing centers. A lot of indirect propaganda can be done this way. It has the advantage of making members write for catalogues and take some personal trouble, by which not only they "acquire merit," as the Buddhists would say, but they also get to peruse lists of Theosophical literature and to often procure some themselves.

3. Here is another little work that any one can do and which is all helpful. For New Year, instead of sending the usual ugly cards that have to do with inane subjects or gastronomic anticipations, let some carefully-thought-out card of a theosophic character, with tasteful good wishes or some useful phrase or maxim, be prepared, that the greetings you send may have "the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace." Again, if you give a present, why not a little book, like "Light on the Path" or "The Voice of the Silence" or a nice calendar or diary got up with suitable extracts?

4. Besides books, there are a quantity of pamphlets on every sort of subject which await distribution. All sections have found the value of printed lectures in pamphlet form. They are the easiest and the cheapest means of disseminating theosophical arguments and view-points. So often a conversation with a friend or a chance acquaintance has led up to an interesting point where a very little more time or explanation would have matured the thought, and where, instead, it perished stillborn for want of being followed up by a suitable pamphlet or small book on the subject.

How often does it happen to read some interesting article in a newspaper or review where evidently the writer is groping round those truths that a knowledge of theosophy would illuminate for him. In such a case it is well to note down the name of the writer and the paper or review in which his article appeared, and then either to correspond with some theosophists in his city, with a view to their getting into touch with him, or else to correspond directly or by means of a common acquaintance, or, again, if this is not desired, to send him some lecture or pamphlet touching on his subject, and from time to time continuing to do so. You will see how your list increases in the year. It doesn't matter at all that you are ignored and receive no acknowledgment. We are not in search of the "fruits of action;" all we want to do is to neglect no opening, to miss no channel, to let go no opportunity of letting people know of theosophy and the Theosophical Society. When we have done that our part is done, and it will be their Karma and not ours if they choose or refuse to profit thereby. But woe to us if we neglect our chances of spreading the good seed! Again, a man may not be at all inclined for the Theosophical Society as such, but may be very willing to work along certain beneficent lines; for such an one there is the "Order of Service." Round him some T. S. members who sympathize with the object could get a league in the "O. of S." for that particular object, and so not only do a lot of good, but probably end by interesting him as well in theosophy. When you meet a person the thing to do is to try and see in what he is interested, not to speak of your own hobby, but to interest him further in his work by illuminating it with

theosophical knowledge and giving him an ideal to work for and a rationale in the working of it.

5. Here is another suggestion in connection with literary activities and the order of service: You will remember the blind professor, Prof. Romagnoti, who has done so much for those without eyesight, who has shown by his writings and lectures, much along Helen Keller's lines, how depressing it is for the blind to be pitied and how necessary it is to seek to uplift them, to make them help themselves out of their misfortunes by encouragement and cheerful co-operation. Much may be done by theosophists to make the lot of blind people happier. In Holland and elsewhere recently a number of theosophists have started printing theosophical works in Braille type which can be read by the blind with their fingers. Here is a work that could very usefully bring theosophical knowledge to many of the blind, who, like other people, and often better than many, can and want to think on these subjects. For many truths propagated by theosophy are to the blind self-evident facts, since the deprival of one of their most important outer senses forces them back on themselves, making them far more introspective, intuitive and sensitive than the average man whose attention is continually distracted by what his eyes reflect. The blind truly often see what the man with eyes is blind to. Here is a field for theosophic effort and for loving help and sympathy as well.

6. Now as regards the sectional magazine: It depends entirely on the members how far they make of it a really valuable organ. Let everybody who has ideas send them in and care nothing whether they are adopted or not. That is the theosophical spirit—selflessness and disinterestedness. We are all a family of elders and youngers in this, as in every other section. We have our local and much-loved head in the general secretary and the little body of friends to carry on the administrative details in the executive committee; let us do our work and let them do their work. Each in his own sphere is quite as responsible and quite as important as is the general secretary or executive in theirs. Each has the karma of his own decisions; let each mind his own business and all will be well. What does it matter if this decision or that is taken? Is it your business? Well, do better another time. Is it some one else's business? Well, don't interfere and don't criticise; it has nothing to do with you. The important thing is that each should do his own part well, and when that is done he can disinterest himself as to the results. It is in the hands of others. Criticise yourself, not others; that is the hard lesson we none of us have yet learned, but which we cannot be happy unless we do learn.

So as each one gets an idea he thinks would be useful, as he reads a notable book, let him note it, let him review it and send it clean and typewritten to the editor of his sectional magazine; it may be useful. "Some one else is sure to have done it," you say, as an excuse for not doing it. What then? Why not do it; it is good practice; also they may not have done it, and you are then giving something of value. Nothing, no effort, no sincere thought, is ever wasted; it all has its use, moral if not material. Many things which ought to be done, in people's estimation, are not done because there is no money. But there never will be money unless there is a beginning made. It is very laudable to do persistent meditation early in the morning; that will certainly benefit the individual, but, supposing you also persistently put aside a coin every evening for a special purpose in a special box or in a savings bank, you would very soon find yourself in a position to carry out some plan with the accumulated means of which you will scarcely have noticed the temporary dislocation. And so on and on one could multiply instance after instance of how funds could be easily put together by a little persistent self-sacrifice and steady purpose. Nothing is worth having that is not obtained at some cost, and you will not forget that in all times and at all periods men have given their all for Divine Wisdom.

Lodges should make a point of delegating their president or their secretary to report fully and in detail to the editor of the sectional organ once a month regarding their work, their requirements, their difficulties, their hopes. Not in tones of complaint or with

want of backbone, which serves only to depress other weak lodges, but in a practical matter-of-fact way, so that measures may be taken to remedy what is at fault and help the weak over their difficulties.

Members should use the sectional organ to effect exchanges of books or to put forward their requirements, etc. As the editor is also general secretary, he will always be able to decide what is proper for insertion and what can be dealt with otherwise.

Without going further into suggestions with regard to this which would take me out of the general scope of my paper, I would say that there is not a member or a lodge who cannot take to himself some little duty whereby he can afford material of one kind or another which will be useful or suggestive of plans for the sectional magazine, and the rendering of it a real bond of union and of information in the section. Members can help it largely by subscribing to it or getting friends to subscribe widely, and causing it to be read by those likely to interest themselves.

7. Theosophists, as we all know, have a number of special views on subjects which are much discussed nowadays—cremation, anti-vivisection and anti-vaccination, vegetarianism, etc. Now on these subjects theosophists should not hesitate to speak openly, and to state why in the light of theosophy, they hold their views. "A brave declaration of principles," as H. P. B. said. One of our duties as pioneers is to face perfectly, placidly, the ignorant prejudices of those who cannot see things in the new light; but without coming to loggerheads with them, we can do all in our power to promote the change of opinion that is taking place all around, whatever the prejudiced may think or say. In the light of theosophy we can explain much about cremation and its desirability, we can tell people why a rapid disintegration of the physical body is desirable, (unless people are afraid of cremation and then it is better they should be buried,) we can explain some after-death states, we can throw light on our objections to vivisection and vaccination, and we can support the practice of clean feeding or vegetarianism for definite reasons.

For instance in going to restaurants, it is quite easy to interest a number of people in vegetarianism if one is a little well-read on the subject. People's ideas are usually entirely erroneous on all these questions and there is no reason why one should not take a little trouble to smoothen the way for all future vegetarian visitors by insisting on clean and properly prepared food. This can be followed up by taking notes and communicating with special societies existing for those special objects. Theosopists should be in sympathy with and co-operate with all those sundry activities that take up some partial and laudable activity, and help them while at the same time remaining staunch theosopists, and trying to bring those who are on partial lines into touch with the more comprehensive scheme.

People often wonder how it is a Vegetarian Society or an Anti-vivisection League can get thousands of members and plenty of money, when the theosophical activity cannot scrape up enough to print a poor little pamphlet. The reason is that while many are prepared and are able to take and to understand the partial activity which limits itself to one end, most are as yet unable to go into the many sides of thought that theosophy represents.

8. In each town members will do well to visit all the public libraries, reading rooms, clubs, etc., in the district and to methodically note when theosophical literature is deficient, and what is required at each. Then let them try to supplement it themselves, or get their friends to do so. If, as a last resort, they cannot put together what they want, they can state their case to the general secretary, who will consider how best to deal with the matter. The great thing is to come out of silence and darkness and do something for theosophy. Time is precious and there is no time to lose. Let each work silently and strongly and persistently, for each is where he is because that is the best place for him. His sphere of usefulness is where he is and he can do as much in Timbuctoo if he happens to be there, as he can in Adyar. For it is not so important what you do as how you do it. It is the qualities you build in yourself; it is the help and the example you afford to others that helps a man to became an occultist.

9. Here is another point of some importance: Remember that it is not with grown-up people and already formed and mature minds that our chief work lies. They belong to the thought-forms of the past; we are working for the future. Our efforts must lie with those who are growing up, young men and women, boys and girls, and even children. Their minds must be prepared for the times that are coming, their opinions changed from the old methods and ways of the generation of our parents to the new conditions which are to be developed in generations to come. A great teacher does not incarnate on earth to found a new religion and a new civilization unless the old forms have out-grown their time and are too rigid and therefore useless. It is natural that among grown up people we shall find little that is plastic or amenable to many of these comparatively new points of view, whereas the egos incarnating just now in young bodies, especially in the more advanced nations, are seizing upon all these ideas as necessary and natural to their proper growth and development.

In the new as well as the old countries, much can be done to help the young generation to fight its way out of the trammels of mistaken forms of education and the clogging influences of prejudiced and narrow thought. We see the signs of it everywhere. Young men struggling for greater liberty of thought; the formation of clubs and leagues for special objects to resist unhealthy or undesirable habits in life, etc., etc.

As an outside activity, theosophists can do so much in promoting right thought and right feeling, and standing strongly against all that is perverted and vicious even though it is tolerated and sanctioned by so-called respectable "society."

There are plenty more suggestions of a practical nature that I could put before you from which each of you could choose, but I neither wish to tire you nor to exhaust your patience. If each one of you were to keep a note book, and in it were to put down the various ideas that came to him each day or each week as to what would be a good plan to help on theosophical ideas in his surroundings, and if he were then to put these ideas, or some of them, into practice, and work at them as his personal contribution of time and energy to the great work, we should have a strong and a growing section, contributing life to the parent society. As you labor new ideas will come; new fields of usefulness will open before you. As you give yourself you will forget your personality, you will care only for the work and care nothing for blame or praise, care nothing for appreciation or thanks.

The true mark of the worker in the Master's fields, of the disciple, is utter selflessness, who cares nothing at all for gratification of self. He cares only that the work shall be done. Personal progress he disregards entirely; it is automatic when unselfish work is done.

There is a very valuable chapter in Prof. William James' Text Book of Psychology in which he is dealing with habit as applied to the mind—a chapter* that all might read with profit, and in it he says: "No matter how full a reservoir of maxims one may possess, and no matter how good one's sentiments may be, if one have not taken advantage of every concrete opportunity to act, one's character may remain entirely unaffected for the better. With mere good intentions, hell is proverbially paved."

Again a little lower down he says:

"When a resolve or a fine glow of feeling is allowed to evaporate without bearing practical fruit, it is worse than a chance lost; it works so as positively to hinder future resolutions and emotions from taking the normal path of discharge."

And finally I quote once more:

"Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day." That is, be systematically regular in a number of little ways each day, so that when you go to bed each day, and put to yourselves the question, "What have I done for theosophy today," you may have not only an easy conscience, but an inflow of strength and of ideas for the morrow.

All those who have embraced these ideas owe so much to Theosophy, that surely they might do something positive for it and share the light they carry with those who are still groping in darkness.

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*Text Book of Psychology, William James, American Science Series, Chapter X, Pages 147, 149. Macmillan & Co., Ltd. 1906, London.

This is the real path of discipleship—this the road to meeting the Masters face to face. So many are anxious to become occultists, to function on other planes of consciousness, to be accepted as disciples, to know the Masters. Well, all these things and more are possible, but only for those who, entirely forgetful of themselves or their own progress, are content to tread the narrow ancient path of service to their fellowmen and to practice in their daily lives, constantly, those qualifications and virtues which are set forth in all the books and principally in the "Outer Court," the "Path of Discipleship" and the last chapters of "Invisable Helpers." No amount of merely intellectual and mental knowledge, no amount of discussion and academic thought will help much. The "school" is a school for character and the training is in the evolution of faculties and special qualifications which subject the three lower vehicles, the body, the emotions, and the mind entirely to the highter nature. That the higher man may be born and may grow up in the strength of the "Father which is in heaven," each must "become as a little child"—not complicated by the attributes of the lower vehicles, but simple and direct as a little child, with the clear, piercing faculties of the higher self.

I would now summarize and conclude.

So far I have put before you only a few of the outer activities in which any of you can take an interest and do much to help on useful ideas. But there is all the inner work to be done besides; the constant study, the deeper thought generated by meditation, the working out of plans for developing the influence of lodge meetings, the harmonious intercourse with lodges and members in other towns. Theosophy should be to every earnest member the mainspring of all his thoughts and actions, and all else subservient to it.

There is a tendency, in some quarters, to encourage vigorously, partial aspects of theosophical teachings, other movements such as spiritualism, new thought, etc., and to keep theosophy well in the back ground. One should no longer now speak in the name of theosophy, keeping the word and the society entirely out of sight. The time has come when theosophists should spread wide the banner of theosophy and feel the privilege of working and speaking under that flag. A new era is dawning, one in which old forms, old ideas, old methods will gradually one by one perish as the wave of new life and the inspiration of new spirituality pours over Western countries and sets Western hearts on fire with hope. Union, co-operation, and love are to take the place of separateness, competition and enmity. The whole of the civilized world is gradually to change its attitude of thought in the things of every-day life. Look around you. Are things happily arranged? Are people happy? Are our standards of ethics, morality, and religion, as a whole, elevated? How can men be happy or sound when the state of things all round us is unsound; when men are grappling with each other in competition; when money is the chief factor in the estimate of people's positions and standing; when religion is in the background and selfishness and greed of individuals, communities and nations form the basis for all their activities? How can money be devoted to the arts of peace and agriculture, to the bettering of social conditions and of the depressed classes, to the education of the young, and the alleviation of the old when immense sums are drained year by year from the manhood and vigour of nations in costly armaments and preparations for war? Supposing men's minds could be changed. Supposing they could see life from a new point of view; supposing they could learn to love instead of to hate, to be helpful and unselfish instead of greedy and self-interested, to understand life as a whole as a manifestation of the divine, of which they are part, instead of ignoring and being totally careless of all that is around them, and that in reality so closely affects them. Think you not that conditions would change, that a new era would dawn, that little by little the sun of happiness would once more shine on men? It is for this that a Great One will come. It is to help the world, to found new civilizations, to regenerate the old, to give new spiritual force, new religious impulses, to implant in men's hearts the seeds of knowledge, of hope, and of happiness. Great teachers came into the world for all this, and how alone can the work of such an One be carried out

nowadays in the world which rapid communications has so interlinked? In no other way than by having in each country a body of people who during a certain period previous to His coming, have felt the note that is to be struck, have anticipated some of the truths that are to be taught, have prepared the ground for the good seed and "labored in the Lord's vineyard." It is a commonplace that no changes of opinions, no changes of thought can be effected quickly. They must come about slowly. Anyone can see, looking back to the end of the last centruy and to the beginning of this one, how quickly things have been changing, how rapidly development has succeeded development. Everyone, even in the different religions, feels that there is an unusual stir in the mental and spiritual worlds. The coming of new life-impulses and forces are precognized almost universally. There is an inner expectancy among the thoughtful that people scarcely dare express. Everyone is feeling something must happen. Mrs. Besant has shown you the deadlock or the impasse in nearly all branches of human activity. Something must occur to bring about a happier, a more normal, a healthier state of things between man and man and nation and nation. It is the younger of us who will see perhaps some of these stirring times that are coming; no doubt some of the transitional and preparatory stages will be far from pleasant. When forms have to be broken up there is generally a period of pain and suffering. There may be wars, there may be revolutions and upheavals before the conditions of the soil shall be suitable for the coming of the sower who is to sow the new seed in men's hearts, but whatever is to be, let us not forget that here and now our duty as theosophists is clear. It is to spread in every way possible the mesage of Theosophy, it is to individually and collectively do our level best to see that all who can hear the message shall have the opportunity of hearing. It is, so far as in us lies, to live the life and conserve the Master's efforts on behalf of humanity by doing all we can in every direction to spread the Gospel of Divine Wisdom, "to prepare the ways of the Lord and to make his paths straight" that the children of men may know and welcome Him when He comes. W. H. Kirby.

Adyar, March 1,1910.

THE AMANA COMMUNITY.

On the banks of the Iowa River, about twenty miles west from Iowa City in the state of Iowa, is a wide valley with fertile, rolling prairies. Along the watercourse are bluffs and woodlands. The river furnishes water power for factories; the rich fertile soil makes farming remunerative.

This favorable location is the home of the Amana Society, a religio-communistic organization, consisting of about 1,800 people. It is distributed over 26,000 acres of land, on which are seven villages. It operates two woolen mills, a factory for the manufacture of cotton prints and two flouring mills; while the facilities for distribution include seven stores, located in its seven villages and supplying the wants of its members and also those of the surrounding farming population. It raises nearly all the agricultural products required for its own use, several hundred hired laborers being employed for its heavier work.

Basically a religious society, its communism is an out-growth. Originating in Germany about 1714, it was at first merely a religious sect. But as the years passed its members were persecuted because their views and methods ran counter to the orthodox faith of the country; and they were forced to send their children to schools dominated by the ruling faith.

In order that they might have freedom to worship according to their conscience and to educate their children in their own religious views, estates were leased or purchased, on which the members lived as a community, but not holding their wealth in common. The affairs of the community prospered; but their conscientious scruples were again a source of trouble. In judicial affairs the members of the Society could not be induced to take an oath and the government of the day would not accept an affirmation in lieu of an oath. The deadlock was broken by the emigration of the

members of the Society to the United States, where, not far from Buffalo, N. Y., 5,000 acres of land were purchased. To this place, between 1843 and 1846, about 800 people came over from Germany, and converted that which had hitherto been the home of the Indians, covered with virgin forests and untilled plains, into farms and prosperous villages.

We are informed that at the time of the purchase of this land, "The Society had no intention to introduce communism into its organization. The original plan was to hold the land and houses in common, each member's contribution to the purchase money being secured by a proportionate share in the real estate and also drawing a reasonable rate of interest. This was soon found to be impracticable, and absolute communism of property was adopted and today is one of the fundamental rules of the Society.

The community, then known as the "Ebenezer Society," increased and prospered until in 1854 it had outgrown the land which it held. Then migration was made to the present location at Amana, to which the committee appointed to secure the location were attracted by the fertility of its soil and the possibilities of its water privileges.

In 1858, under the laws of Iowa, the Community was incorporated as a religious society under the name of "The Amana Society" in which the title to the land is vested.

Out of the income derived from its industries of agriculture, manufactures and trades, the expenses of the Society are defrayed and the surplus applied to improvements, erection of necessary buildings, care of the old and sick, the foundation of a business and safety fund, and benevolent purposes in general.

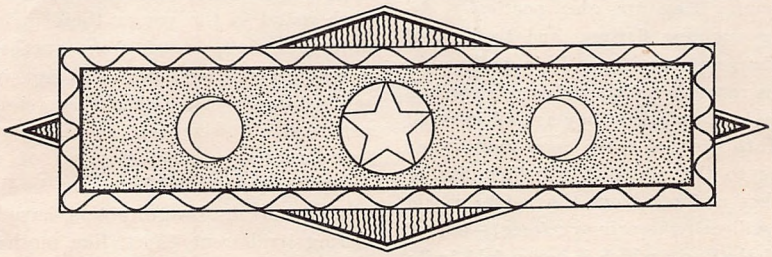
Each member is entitled to free board and dwelling, to suport and care in old age, sickness and infirmity, and to an annual sum in maintenance, the amount of which is fixed by the trustees.

Every member is bound to give his property to the trustees at the time of joining the Society. Upon leaving, either by his own choice or by expulsion, the member will receive back with interest the amount paid by him into the common fund on entering.

The control and management of the Society is vested in a board of thirteen trustees, elected annually out of the eighty elders. The trustees elect their officers, consisting of president, vice-president and secretary.

The community is prosperous and wealthy because of its communism, yet its communism is not practiced for temporal or pecuniary purposes or as an experiment to solve social problems, but as a means to better perform the duties required in leading a Christian life. The members look upon it as the economic fulfilment of the commandment "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

It is an interesting fact that the most successful of communistic societies in America have been those in which communism was an incident, not a purpose. T.



FORCE-CENTRES AND THE SERPENT-FIRE.

The Etheric Centres.

In each of our vehicles there are certain force-centres, which in Sanskrit are called chakrams, a word which signifies a wheel or revolving disc. These are points of connection at which force flows from one vehicle to another. They may easily be seen in the etheric double, where they show themselves as saucer-like depressions or vortices in its surface. They are often spoken of as corresponding to certain physical organs; but it must be remembered that the etheric force-centre is not in the interior of the body, but on the surface of the etheric double, which projects a quarter of an inch beyond the outline of the denser matter.

The centres which are usually employed in occult development are seven, and they are situated in the following parts of the body: (1) The base of the spine; (2), the navel; (3), the spleen; (4), the heart; (5), the throat; (6), the space between the eybrows; (7), the top of the head. There are other force-centres in the body besides these, but they are not employed by students of the White Magic. It may be remembered that Madame Blavatsky speaks of three others which she calls the lower centres; there are schools which use these, but the dangers connected with them are so serious that we should consider their awakening as the greatest misfortune.

These seven are often described as corresponding to the seven colours and to the notes of the musical scale, and in the Indian books certain letters of the alphabet and certain forms of vitality are mentioned as attached to each of them. They are also poetically described as resembling flowers, and to each of them a certain number of petals is assigned.

It must be remembered that they are vortices of etheric matter, and that they are all in rapid rotation. Into each of these open mouths, at right angles to the plane of whirling disc or saucer, rushes a force from the astral world (which we will call the primary force)—one of the forces of the Logos which is seven-fold in its nature, but has one or another of these seven greatly predominating in the combination of all of them which rushes into each of these centres.

This inrush of force brings the Divine Life into the physical body, and without it that body could not exist. These centres through which the force can enter, are therefore actually necessary to the existence of the vehicle, but they may be whirling with very different degrees of activity. Their particles may be in comparatively sluggish motion, just forming the necessary vortex for the force and no more, or they may be glowing and pulsating with living light so that an enormously greater amount of force passes through them, with the result that various additional faculties and possibilities are opened to the Ego as he functions on that plane.

Now, those forces which rush into the centre from without, set up at right angles to themselves, (that is to say, in the surface of the etheric double) secondary forces in undulatory circular motion, just as a bar magnet thrust into an induction coil produces a current of electricity which flows round the coil at right angles to the axis or direction of the magnet.

Each of these secondary forces which sweep round the saucer-like depression has its own characteristic wave-length, just as has light of a certain colour, but instead of moving in a straight line, as light does, it moves along with certain relatively large undulations of various sizes, each of which is some multiple of the smaller wave-lengths within it, though the exact proportions have not yet been calculated.

The wave-lengths are infinitesimal, and probably some thousand of them are included within one of the undulations. As the forces rush round in the vortex these undulations of differents sizes, crossing one another, produce a wavy appearance which is not inaptly described in the Hindu books as resembling the petals of a flower; or it is still more like certain saucers or shallow vases of wavy irridescent glass which I have seen in Venice. All of these undulations, or petals, have that shimmering irridescent effect, like mother-of-pearl, yet each of them has usually its own predominant colour.

In the ordinary man, in whom these centres are just active enough to be channels for sufficient force to keep his body alive, these colours glow with comparatively dull light, but in those in whom the centres have been aroused and are in full activity, they are of a blinding brilliancy, and the centres themselves, which have gradually grown from a diameter of about two inches to the size of an ordinary saucer, are blazing and corruscating like miniature suns.

The Etheric Centres Particularized.

The first centre, at the base of the spine, so arranges its undulations as to give the effect of its being divided into quadrants, with hollows between them. This makes it seem as though marked with the sign of the cross, and for that reason the cross is often used to symbolize this centre, and sometimes a flaming cross is used to indicate the serpent-fire which resides in it. When aroused into full activity, this centre is fiery orange-red in colour.

The second centre, at the navel, or the solar-plexus, vibrates in such a manner as to divide itself into ten undulations or petals, and is very closely associated with feelings and emotions of various kinds. Its predominant colour is a curious blending of various shades of red.

The third centre, at the spleen, gives the effect of six petals or undulations, and it seems that all of these are concerned in the subdivision, dispersion and specialization of the vitality which comes to us from the sun. Presumably for that reason this centre is specially radiant, glowing and sun-like.

The fourth centre, at the heart, is of a glowing golden colour, and each of its quadrants is divided into three parts, which gives it twelve undulations.

The fifth centre, at the throat, has sixteen such apparent divisions, but its general effect is silvery and gleaming, with a kind of suggestion as of moonlight on rippling water.

The sixth centre, between the eyebrows, has the appearance of being divided into halves, one predominantly rose-colored, and the other predominantly purplish-blue. Perhaps it is for this reason that this centre is mentioned in Indian books as having only two petals, though if we are to count undulations of the same character as those of the previous centres, we shall find that each half is subdivided into forty-eight of these, making ninety-six in all.

The seventh, the centre at the top of the head, is, when stirred into full activity, perhaps the most resplendent of all, full of indescribable chromatic effect, and vibrating with almost inconceivable rapidity. It is described in Indian books as thousand-petalled, and really this is not very far from the truth, the total number of its undulations being nine hundred and sixty. In addition to this, it has a feature which is possessed by none of the other centres—a sort of subsidary whirlpool of gleaming white in its heart—a minor activity which has twelve undulations of its own.

I have heard it suggested that each of the different petals of these force-centers represents a moral quality, and that the development of that quality brings the centre into activity. I have not met with any facts which confirm this, nor am I able to see exactly how it can be, because the appearance is produced by certain quite definite and easily recognizable forces, and the petals in any particular centre are either active or not active, according as these forces have or have not been aroused; and their development seems to me to have no more connection with morality than has the development of the biceps. I have certainly met with persons in whom some of the centres were in full activity, though the moral development was by no means exceptionally high, whereas in other persons of high spirituality and the noblest possible morality the centres were not yet developed at all, so that there does not seem to me to be any connection between the two developments.

The Astral Centres.

Besides keeping alive the physical vehicle, these force-centres have another function, which comes into play only when they are awakened into full activity. Each of these etheric centres corresponds to an astral centre, though as the astral centre is a vortex in four dimensions, it has an extension in a direction quite different from the etheric, and conse-

quently is by no means co-terminous with it, though some part is coincident. The etheric vortex is always on the surface of the etheric body, but the astral centre is frequently quite in the interior of that vehicle. The function of each of these etheric centres, when fully aroused, is to bring down into physical consciousness whatever may be the quality inherent in the astral centre which corresponds to it; so, before cataloguing the results to be obtained by arousing the etheric centres into activity, it may be well to consider what is done by each of the astral centres, although these latter are already in full activity in all cultured people of the later races. What effect, then, has the quickening of each of these astral centres produced in the astral body?

The first of these centres, that at the base of the spine, is the home of that mysterious force called the serpent-fire. I will say more about this force later; for the moment let us consider its effects on the astral centres. This force exists on all planes and by its activity the rest of the centres are aroused. We must think of the astral body as having been originally an almost inert mass, with nothing but the vaguest consciousness, with no definite power of doing anything, and no clear knowledge of the world which surrounded it. The first thing that happened then was the awakening of that force in the man at the astral level. When awakened, it moved on to the second centre, corresponding to the navel, and vivified it, thereby awakening in the astral body the power of feeling—a sensitiveness to all sorts of influences, though without as yet anything like the definite comprehension that comes from seeing or hearing.

Then it moved on to the third, that corresonding to the physical spleen, and through it vitalized the whole astral body, enabling the person to travel consciously, though with only a vague conception as yet of what he encountered on his journeys.

The fourth centre, when awakened, endowed the man with the power to comprehend and sympathize with the vibrations of other astral entities, so that he could instinctively understand their feelings.

The awakening of the fifth, that corresponding to the throat, gave him the power of hearing on the astral plane—that is to say, it caused the development of that sense which in the astral world produces on our consciousness the effect which on the physical plane we call hearing.

The development of the sixth, that corresponding to the centre between the eyebrows, in a similar manner produced astral sight.

The arousing of the seventh, that corresponding to the top of the head, rounded off and completed for him the astral life, and endowed him with the perfection of its faculties.

With regard to this centre, a certain difference seems to exist, according to the type to which men belong. For many of us the astral vortices corresponding to the sixth and seventh of these centres both converge upon the pituitary body, and for those people this centre is practically the only direct link between the physical and the higher planes. Another type of people, however, while still attaching the sixth centre to the pituitary body, bend or slant the seventh until its vortex coincides with the atrophied organ called the pineal gland, which is by people of that type vivified and made into a line of communication directly with the lower mental, without apparently passing through the intermediate astral plane in the ordinary way. Madame Blavatsky was writing for people of this type when she attached so much importance to the awakening of the pineal gland.

Astral Senses.

Thus these to some extent take the place of sense-organs for the astral body, and yet without proper qualification that expression would be decidedly a misleading one, for it must never be forgotten that though, in order to make ourselves intelligible, we constantly have to speak of astral seeing or astral hearing, all that we really mean by those expressions is the faculty of responding to such vibrations as convey to the man's consciousness when he is functioning in his astral body information of the same character as that conveyed to him by his eyes and ears while he is in the physical body. But in the entirely different astral conditions specialized organs are

not necessary for the attainment of this result. There is matter in every part of the astral body which is capable of such response, and consequently the man functioning in that vehicle sees equally well the objects behind him, above him, and beneath him, without needing to turn his head. The centres, therefore, cannot be described as organs in the ordinary sense of the word, since it is not through them that the man sees or hears as he does here, through the eyes and ears. Yet it is upon their vivification that the power of exercising these astral senses depends, each of them as it is developed giving to the whole astral body the power of response to a new set of vibrations.

As all the particles of the astral body are constantly flowing and swirling about like those of boiling water, all of them in turn pass through each of the centres or vortices, so that each centre in its turn evokes in all the particles of the body the power of receptivity to a certain set of vibrations, and so all the astral senses are equally active in all parts of the body. Even when these astral centres are fully awakened it by no means follows that the man will be able to bring through into his physical body any consciousness of their action.

Awakening the Etheric Centres.

While all this astral awakening was taking place, the man in his physical consciousness knew nothing whatever of it. The only way in which the dense body can be brought to share all these advantages is by repeating that process of awakening with the etheric centres. That is to be achieved precisely in the same way as it was done upon the astral plane, that is to say, by the arousing of the serpent-fire which exists clothed in etheric matter on the physical plane, and sleeps in the corresponding etheric centre, that at the base of the spine.

In this case the arousing is done by a determined and long-continued effort of the will, and to bring the first centre into activity is precisely to awaken the serpent-fire. When once that is aroused, it is by its tremendous force that the other centres are vivified. Its effect on the other etheric centres is to bring into the physical consciousness the powers which were aroused by the development of their corresponding astral centres.

When the second of the etheric centres, that at the navel, comes into activity, the man begins in the physical body to be conscious of all kinds of astral influences, vaguely feeling that some of them are friendly and others hostile, or that some places are pleasant and others unpleasant, without in the least knowing why.

When the third centre, that at the spleen, is awakened, the man is enabled to remember his vague astral journeys, though sometimes only very partially. The effect of a slight and accidental stimulation of this centre is very often to produce half-remembrances of a blissful sensation of flying through the air.

Stimulation of the fourth, that at the heart, makes the man instinctively aware of the joys and sorrows of others, and sometimes even causes him to reproduce in himself by sympathy their physical aches and pains.

The arousing of the fifth, that at the throat, enables him to hear voices, which sometimes make all kinds of suggestions. Also sometimes he hears music or other less pleasant sounds. When it is fully working, it makes the man clairaudient as far as the etheric and astral planes are concerned.

When the sixth, between the eyebrows, becomes vivified, the man begins to see things, to have various sorts of waking visions, sometimes of places, sometimes of people. In its earlier development, when it is only just beginning to be awakened, it often means nothing more than half seeing landscapes and clouds of colour. The full arousing of this brings about clairvoyance.

The centre between the eyebrows is connected with sight in yet another way. It is through it that the power of magnification of minute physical objects is exercised. A tiny flexible tube of etheric matter is projected from the centre of it, resembling a miscroscopic snake with an eye at the end of it. This is the special organ used in that form of clairvoyance, and the eye at the end of it can be expanded or contracted, the effect being to change the power of magnification according to the size of the object which is being examined. This is what is meant in ancient books when

mention is made of the capacity to make oneself large or small at will. To examine an atom one develops an organ of vision commensurate in size with the atom. This little snake projecting from the centre of the forehead was symbolized upon the headdress of the Pharaoh of Egypt, who as the chief priest of his country was supposed to possess this among many other occult powers.

When the seventh is awakened the man is able by passing through it to leave his body in full consciousness, and also to return to it without the usual break, so that his consciousness will now be continuous through night and day.

When the fire has been passed through all of these centres in a certain order (which varies for different types of people) the consciousness becomes continuous up to the entry into the Heaven-world at the end of the life on the astral plane, no difference being made by either the temporary separation from the physical body during sleep or the permanent division at death. Before this is done, however, the man may have many glimpses of the astral world, for specially strong vibrations may at any time galvanize one or other of the centres into temporary activity. The fire may be partially aroused, and in this way also partial clairvoyance may be produced for the time. For this fire exists in seven layers or seven degrees of force, and it often happens that a man who exerts his will in the effort to arouse it may succeed in affecting one layer only, and so when he thinks that he has done the work he may find it ineffective and may have to do it all over again many times, digging gradually deeper and deeper, until not only the surface is stirred, but the very heart of the fire is in full activity.

The Serpent Fire.

As we know it, this serpent-fire (called in Sanskrit Kundalini) is the manifestation on the physical plane of one of the great world forces—one of the powers of the Logos. You know that what we call electricity is a manifestation of one of His forces, and that that force may take various forms, such as heat, light and motion. Another of His forces is vitality—what is sometimes called Prana, but this is not interchangeable with any of those other forms which we have just mentioned. We may say then, that vitality and electricity are, as it were, the lower ends of two of His streams of force.

This serpent-fire may be taken as the lower end of another of His streams, the physical plane manifestation of another of the manifold aspects of His power. Like vitality, it exists on all planes of which we know anything. But it is the expression of it in etheric matter with which we have to do. It is not convertible into either vitality or electricity, and does not seem to be in any way affected by either. I have seen as much as a milion and a quarter volts of electricity put into a human body, so that when the man held out his arms towards the wall, huge flames rushed out from his fingers, yet he felt nothing unusual, nor was he in the least burnt unless he accidentally touched some external object; but even this enormous display of power had no effect whatever upon the serpent-fire. In The Voice of the Silence this force is called "The Fiery Power" and the "World's Mother." There is much reason for all these strange names, for it is in very truth like liquid fire as it rushes through the body, and the course through which it ought to move is a spiral one like the coils of a serpent. It is called the "World's Mother" because through it our various vehicles may be vivified so that higher worlds may open before us in succession.

In the body of man, its home, as we have said, is at the base of the spine, and for the ordinary person it lies there unawakened, and its very presence unsuspected during the whole of his life; and it is far better to allow it thus to remain dormant until the man has made very definite moral development, until his will is strong enough to control it, and his thoughts pure enough to enable him to face its awakening without injury. No one should experiment with it without definite instructions from a teacher who thoroughly understands the subject, for the dangers connected with it are very real and terribly serious. Some of them are purely physical. Its uncontrolled movement often produces intense physical pain, and it

may very readily tear tissues and even destroy physical life. This, however, is the least of the evils of which it is capable, for it may do permanent injury to vehicles higher than the physical. One very common effect of arousing it prematurely is that it rushes downward in the body instead of upwards, and thus excites the most undesirable passions—excites them and intensifies their effects to such a degree that it becomes absolutely impossible for the man to resist them, because a force has been brought into play in whose presence he is as helpless as a swimmer before the jaws of a shark. Such men become satyrs, monsters of depravity, because they are in the grasp of a force that is out of all proportion to the ordinary human power of resistance. Such a man would probably gain certain supernormal powers, but they would be such as would bring him into touch with a low order of evolution, with which humanity is intended to hold no commerce, and to escape from its awful thralldom may take him more than one incarnation. There is a school of black magic which purposely uses this power in this way in order that through it may be vivified those lower force-centres which are never used by the followers of the Good Law.

Even apart from this greatest of its dangers, its premature unfoldment has many other unpleasant possibilities. It intensifies everything in the man's nature, and it reaches the lower and evil qualities more readily than the good. In the mental body, for example, ambition is very readily aroused, and soon swells to an inordinate degree. It would be likely to bring with it a great intensification of the power of intellect, but at the same time it would produce abnormal and satanic pride, such as is quite inconceivable to the ordinary man. It is not wise for a man to think that he is prepared to cope with any force that may arise within his body; this is no ordinary force, but something resistless. Assuredly no uninstruted man should ever try to awaken it, and if such an one finds that it has been aroused by accident, he should at once consult someone who fully understands these matters.

It may be noticed that I have specially and intentionally refrained from explaining how this arousing is to be done, or of the order in which the force when aroused should be passed through these various centres, for that should by no means be attempted except at the express suggestion of a Master who will watch over His pupil during the various stages of the experiment. I very solemnly warn all students against making any effort whatever in the direction of awakening these tremendous forces, except under such qualified tuition, for I myself have seen many cases of the terrible effects which follow from ignorant and ill-advised meddling with these very serious matters. This force is a stupendous reality, one of the great basic facts of Nature, and most emphatically it is not a thing to be played with, or to be lightly taken in hand, for to experiment with it, without understanding it, is far more dangerous than it would be for a child to play with nitro-glycerine. In matters such as these students so often seem to think that some special exception to the laws of nature will be made in their case, that some special intervention of Providence will save them from the consequences of their folly. Assuredly nothing of that sort will happen, and the man who wantonly provokes an explosion is quite likely to become its first victim. It would save much trouble and disappointment if students could be induced to understand that in all matters connected with occultism we mean just exactly and literally what we say, and that it is applicable in every case without exception. For there is no such thing as favouritism in the work of the great laws of the universe. Everybody wants to try all possible experiments; everybody is convinced that he is quite ready for the highest possible teaching and for any sort of development, and not one is willing to work patiently along at the development of character, and to devote his time and his energies to doing something useful for the work of the Society, waiting for all these other things until a Master shall announce that the pupil is ready. The old aphorism still remains true "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

There are some cases in which the serpent-fire wakens spontaneously, so that a dull glow

is felt, and it may even begin to move, though this is rare. In this latter case it would be likely to cause great pain, as, since the passages are not prepared for it, it would have to clear its way by actually burning out a great deal of etheric dross—a process that cannot but cause much suffering. When it thus awakens of itself or is accidentally aroused, it usually tries to rush up the interior of the spine instead of following the spiral course into which the occultist is trained to guide it. If it be possible, the will should be set in motion to arrest its downward rush, but if that proves to be impossible (as is most likely) no alarm need be felt. It will probably rush out through the head and escape into the surrounding atmosphere, and it is likely that no harm will result beyond a slight weakening. The most serious effect would be a temporary loss of consciousness. The really appalling dangers are not connected with its upward rush, but with the possibility of its turning downwards and inwards. Its principal function in connection with occult development is that by being sent through a force of centres in the etheric body, as above described, it vivifies these centres and makes them available as gates of connection between the physical and astral bodies. It is said in the Voice of the Silence that when the serpent-fire reaches the centre between the eyebrows and fully vivifies it, it confers the power of hearing the voice of the Master—which means in this case the voice of the Ego, or Higher Self. The reason for this statement is that when the pituitary body is brought into working order it forms a perfect link with the astral vehicle, so that through it all communications from within can be received. Not only this one but all the higher force-centres have in due course to be awakened, and each must be made responsive to all kinds of astral influences from the various astral subplanes. This development will come to all in due course, but most people cannot gain it during the present incarnation, though Indian bodies are by heredity more adaptable than most others. This really for the majority is the work of a later round. The conquest of the serpent-fire has to be repeated in each incarnation, since the vehicles are new ones each time, but after it has once been thoroughly achieved these repetitions will be an easy matter. It must be remembered that its action varies with different types of people; some, for example, would see the Higher Self rather than hear its voice. Again, this connection with the higher has many stages; for the personality it means the influence of the Ego, but for the Ego himself it means the power of the Monad, and for the Monad in turn it means to become a conscious expression of the Logos.

It may be of use to you if I mention my own experience in this matter. In the earlier part of my residence in India, I made no effort in that direction, not indeed knowing very much about it, and having the opinion that, in order to do anything with it, it was necessary to to be born with a specially psychic body, which I did not possess. But one day one of the Masters made a suggestion to me with regard to a certain kind of meditation which would evoke this force. Naturally I at once put the suggestion into practice, and in course of time was successful. I have no doubt, however, that He watched the experiment, and would have checked me if it had become dangerous. I am told that there are Indian ascetics who teach this to their pupils, of course keeping them under careful supervision during the process. But I do not myself know of any such, nor should I have confidence in them unless they were specially recommended by someone whom I knew to be possessed of real knowledge.

People often ask me what I should advise them to do with regard to the arousing of this force. I should advise them to do exactly what I myself did. I should recommend them to throw themselves into Theosophical work and wait until they received a definite command from some Master who would undertake to superintend their psychic development, continuing of course, all the ordinary exercises of meditation that are known to them. They should not care in the least whether such development comes in this incarnation or in the next, regarding the matter from the point of view of the Ego and not of the personality, and feeling absolutely certain that the Masters are always watching for those whom they can help, that it is entirely impossible for anyone

to be overlooked, and that They will unquestionably give Their directions when They think that the right time has come.

I have never heard that there is any sort of age limit with regard to the development, and I do not see that age should make any difference, so long as one has perfect health; but it would be doubly dangerous for a weak man to try it.

The force when aroused must be very strictly controlled, and it must be moved through the centres in an order which differs for people of different types. The movement also to be effective must be made in a particular way, which the Master will explain when the time comes.

The Veil Between the Planes.

I have said that the astral and etheric centres are in very close correspondence; but between them, interpenetrating them, in a manner not readily describable, is a sheath or web of closely woven texture, a sheath composed of a single layer of physical atoms drawn very closely together and permeated by a special form of vital force. The divine life which normally descends from the astral body to the physical, is so attuned as to pass through this with perfect ease, but it is an absolute barrier to all other forces—all which cannot use the atomic matter of both the planes. This web is the natural protection provided by nature to prevent a premature opening-up of communication between the planes, a development which could lead to nothing but injury.

It is this which under normal conditions prevents a clear recollection of what has happened during sleep, and it is this also which causes the momentary unconsciousness which always occurs at death. But for this merciful provision the ordinary man, who knows nothing about all these things and is entirely unprepared to meet them, could at any moment be brought by any astral entity under the influence of forces to cope with which would be entirely beyond his strength. He would be liable to constant obsession by any being on the astral plane who desired to seize upon his vehicles.

It will, therefore, be readily understood that any injury to this web is a very serious disaster. There are several ways in which injury may come, and it behooves us to use our best endeavors to guard against it. It may come either by accident of by continued malpractice. Any great shock to the astral body, such for example as a sudden terrible fright, may rend apart this delicate organization and, as it is commonly expressed, drive the man mad. (Of course there are other ways in which fear may cause insanity, but this is one). A tremendous outburst of anger may also produce the same effect. Indeed it may follow upon any exceedingly strong emotion of an evil character which produces a kind of explosion in the astral body.

The malpractices which may gradually injure this protective web are of two classes—the use of alcohol or narcotic drugs and the deliberate endeavor to throw open the doors which nature has kept closed, by means of such a process as is described in spiritualistic parlance as "sitting for development." Certain drugs and drinks, notably alcohol and all the narcotics, including tobacco, contain matter which on breaking up volatilises, and some of it passes from the physical plane to the astral. Even tea and coffee contain this matter, but in quantities so infinitesimal that it is usually only after long-continued abuse of them that the effect manifests itself. When this takes place in the body of man these constituents rush out through the force-centres in the opposite direction to that for which they are intended, and in doing this repeatedly they very seriously injure and finally destroy the delicate web. This deterioration or destruction may be brought about in two different ways, according to the type of the person concerned and to the proportion of the constituents in his etheric and astral bodies. First the rush of volatilizing matter actually burns away the web, and therefore leaves the door open to all sorts of irregular forces and evil influences.

The second result is that these volatile constituents, in flowing through, somehow harden the atoms so that their pulsation is to a large extent checked and crippled, and they are no longer capable of being vitalized by the particular type of force which welds them into a web. The result of this is a kind of ossifica-

tion of the web, so that instead of having too much coming through from one plane to the other, we have very little of any kind coming through. We may see the effects of both these types of deterioration in the case of men who yield themselves to drunkenness. Some of those who are affected in the former way, fall into delirium tremens, obsession or insanity; but these are after all comparatively rare. Far more common is the second type of deterioration in which case we have a kind of general deadening down of the manly qualities, resulting in gross materialism, brutality and animalism, in the loss of all finer feelings, and of the power to control himself. He no longer feels any sense of responsibility; he may love his wife and children when sober, but when the fit of drunkenness comes upon him he will use the money which should have bought bread for them to satisfy his own bestial cravings, the affection and the sense of responsibility having apparently disappeared.

All impressions which pass from one plane to another are intended to come only through the atomic subplanes as I have said; but when this deadening process sets in it presently infects not only other atomic matter, but matter of even the second and third subplanes, so that the only communication between the astral and the etheric, is on the lower subplanes upon which only unpleasant and evil influences are to be found.

Nevertheless, though nature takes such precautions to guard these centres, she by no means intends that they shall be kept always so rigidly closed. There is a proper way in which they may be opened. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the intention is not that the doors should be opened any wider than their present position, but that the man should so develop himself as that he can bring a very great deal through the recognized channels. The consciousness of the ordinary man cannot yet use pure atomic matter either in the physical body or in the astral, and therefore there is normally no possibility for him of conscious communication at will between the two planes. The proper way to obtain that is to purify both the vehicles until the atomic matter in both is fully vivified, so that all communications between the two may be able to pass by that road. In that case the web retains to the fullest degree its position and activity, and yet is no longer a barrier to perfect commuication, while it still continues to fulfill its purpose of preventing the close contact between the lower subplanes which would permit all sorts of undesirable influences to pass through.

This is why we are always adjured to wait for the unfolding of psychic powers until they come in the natural course of events as a consequence of the development of character, as we see from a study of these force-centres that they surely will. That is the natural evolution; that is the only really safe way, for by it the student obtains all the benefits and avoids all the dangers. That is the path which our Masters have trodden in the past, that therefore, is the path for us today.

C. W. Leadbeater.

Shelley describes the vague and evanescent nature of the transcendental sense in his "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty":

The awful shadow of some unseen Power,
Floats tho' unseen amongst us—visiting
This various world with an inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower:
Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,
It visits with inconstant glance
Each human heart and countenance:
Like hues and harmonies of evening,—
Like clouds in starlight widely spread,—
Like memory of music fled,
Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

ON CEREALS.[1]

Until recently, when the cereals were intended for porridge, they were, as a rule, simply husked and more or less crushed. Such products required long, slow cooking, and were hardly convenient for those who could not keep a fire all day. The earliest of the cereal breakfast foods which came into general use in the United States were of this class, oats being the most commonly eaten. Coarsely ground uncooked wheat does not seem to have been so generally used for preparing a breakfast dish, though corn meal and hominy have long been and still are popular. As the use of cereal breakfast foods became more common, the raw products were to a considerable extent replaced by the so-called rolled oats and wheat, in which more or less of the cooking had been done at the factory, and these goods are commonly conceded to surpass the simpler old-fashioned raw products in ease of preparation in the household and in other ways. The manufacturers claim that the malted and otherwise specially prepared goods, which are a later development, represent a still further advance These specially prepared cereals are usually sold in packages under proprietary names, which may or may not indicate their real nature. The methods of preparation vary greatly, and the exact details of processes are, of course, the secrets of the manufacturers. However, enough is known to give a fairly correct idea of the processes.

To begin with, the grains are usually very carefully cleaned. Ingenious devices have been invented for removing foreign seeds, dirt, and other substances which may have found their way into the grain. The husk or glumes of such grains as oats, barley, and rice are very thoroughly removed, so that the amount left in is much smaller than formerly.

Among the first of the modern preparations to be introduced were the "rolled" grains. To make these the husked grain is cooked for some time by steam and while still wet is run between rollers and pressed into thin flakes. After drying, the product is ready for marketing. Such rolled grains usually do not pretend to be more than partly cooked and are supposed to be thoroughtly recooked before serving.

The ready-to-eat brands are prepared in a great variety of ways. Some are probably simply cooked in water and then dried and crushed; some are made of a mixture of different grains; some have common salt, malt, and apparently sugar, molasses, or other carbohydrate material added to them; some probably caramel or other similar coloring matter. Those with a flake-white appearance are made like rolled grains, save that the cooking is continued longer. Those which look like dried crumbs are probably made into a dough, baked, crushed, and browned. The shredded preparations are made with special machinery which tears the steam-cooked kernels into shreds and deposits them in layers or bundles. Very many of the ready-to-eat cereals are parched or toasted before packing. This gives them a darker color, makes them more crisp and imparts a flavor which many persons relish.

In the so-called "malted" or "predigested" preparations, malt or some similar substance is added during the process of manufacture. Malt, it will be recalled, is grain (usually barley) allowed to germinate until a ferment called diastase is developed, and then kiln-dried. This ferment, like some others, has the power, under certain conditions, of changing starch, which is insoluble in water, into various soluble forms, such as dextrin, isomaltose, and maltose (sugar of malt). These soluble forms are more easily acted upon by the digestive juices than the original starch. How much starch is actually changed in the malted cereals and how desirable it is to have it so changed outside of the body, are questions which are considered in a later section.

Some of the cereals have apparently been cooked by dry heat only. In the case of puffed rice, which suggests popped corn somewhat in flavor and texture, it is said that the expansion of the grain is caused by heating it under pressure at a fairly high temperature and then suddenly diminishing the pressure.

[1] From a pamphlet of the Dept. of Agriculture.

In comparing the new cereal preparations with the old-fashioned ones we must not forget the neatness with which they are now put up. It was hard to tell what might have happened to some of the old brands. They were often ground from imperfectly cleaned grain, in small and inconvenient mills where it was hard to keep out dirt, and were commonly sold from bins and barrels into which dust could easily find a way. In the modern mill cleanliness is found to be the best policy, and the neat, almost air-tight paper and cardboard packages in which the foods are sold are, as a rule, an assurance to the purchaser that they reach him as clean and fresh as they left the mill. In some of the manufactories the preparation of the cereal food seems almost perfection as regards cleanliness.

For convenience in transporting and handling, as well as to insure absolute protection from moisture and from air containing dust and germs, some cereal breakfast foods are marketed in sealed tin cans. The cans are evidently filled under pressure and consequently the cereals occupy relatively a small amount of space per pound.

The constituents of all foods, it will be recalled, are water, protein, fats, carbohydrates, and mineral matter or ash. Water, though needed in considerable quantities by the body, is obtained from beverages as well as from solid food and does not count as one of the nutritive materials or nutrients of food.

In comparing the composition of the different cereals it is apparent that while they resemble each other closely and all are rich in carbohydrates, there are certain differences between them which are quite characteristic. Thus, corn is characterized by a relatively high proportion of fat; oats are relatively rich in both protein and fat; rice is comparatively free from crude fiber and fat; wheat and rye have a high proportion of protein with a moderate amount of fat, while barley and wild rice contain about average proportions of all the nutritive ingredients. Judged by their chemical composition alone, that is, by the total amount of nutrients furnished, of the six most important cereal grains, namely, wheat, oats, rice, corn, rye, and barley, oats appear to furnish the nutrients in better proportions than the other cereals. Wheat ranks very close to oats and corn next to wheat.

The hulling and other processes followed in the manufacture of cereal breakfast foods frequently remove some of the crude fiber of the outer layers of the grain, and so many of the manufactured products contain less of this indigestible material than the original grain. In general, however, a comparison of the cereal breakfast foods and the grains from which they are made shows that the manufactured products are very similar in composition to the original grain. This is what might be expected when it is remembered that cleaning, milling, and otherwise manipulating the grains take little from them and add nothing to them, though such processes may and do modify materially the appearance, texture, and flavor. The oat foods contain the largest amounts of digestible protein and fat and their fuel value is highest. The wheat preparations, either plain or malted, rank next to the oats as regards digestible protein. The barley, corn, and rice preparations are much alike, both in the amounts of digestible nutrients furnished and in the available energy which they yield.

The quantities of nutrients digested from the breakfast cereals correspond very closely to the quantities digested in other cereal preparations from the same grains. Thus, wheat breakfast foods and macaroni supply about equal amounts of digestible material, as do also corn mush and corn bread. The so-called partially digested or ready-to-eat cereals seem to supply no more digestible matrial than the plain grains when well cooked.

The cereal breakfast foods, in general, like entire-wheat and Graham bread, are somewhat less digestible than white bread.

When the digestibility of the cereals alone was calculated, rolled wheat ranked first, not only in digestibility of the total organic matter, but also with respect to the protein. The rolled oats ranked next, and the corn preparations and a specially prepared whole-wheat product the lowest of all.

Much has been said recently about the comparative values of wheat preparations with and without bran. The bran of wheat consists of

three layers, all of which contain larger proportions of crude fiber than the interior of the grain. The two outer layers also contain more of certain desirable mineral matters, notably phosphorus compounds, lime, and iron, than the other parts of the grain, while the innermost layer contains a special kind of protein, also valuable. In Graham flour and perhaps a few of the whole-wheat breakfast foods, all the bran is left in. In the so-called "whole" or "entire" wheat flours and most wheat breakfast foods, the attempt is made to remove the two outer coats and all three seed coats in making the white or patent process flour and some of the special breakfast-food preparations. The question is whether or not the mineral matters and protein gained from the bran compensate for the increase in cellulose. In a large number of experiments with bread made from the different kinds of flour, it was found that however superior Graham and entire-wheat flour were in composition, the bread made from them was so much less thoroughly digested that they supplied the body with less available nutrients than similar bread made from white flour. Experiments which have been made with cereal breakfast foods also show that the presence of bran slightly lessens the amount of nutrients digested.

For persons troubled with constipation food products containing the bran are doubtless often valuable, as the coarse particles tend to increase the peristaltic action of the intestines. Whether or not they should be given to invalids is a question for physicians, who are acquainted with the special cases, to decide. The difference between them and the bran-free foods is, however, so slight that the ordinary healthy person can safely consult his taste, convenience, and economy in choosing between them, as all are wholesome and quite generally palatable. It should be remembered also that the use of a number of different kinds of foods of a similar character is one way of giving variety to the diet, and variety is generally admitted to be desirable.

The idea of having part of the process of digestion performed outside of the body is not a new one, nor is it confined to human food About thirty years ago there was a furor over malted fodder for cattle, which it was claimed would greatly increase the strength and flesh of the animals by sparing them part of the work of digestion. It was soon found, however, that the cattle did fully as well when left to perform their own work of digestion in the way that nature intended.

Physicians have used predigested foods of different sorts for their patients for many years. Since the diastase of malt imitates the work of the diastase of saliva and pancreas so well, it is the common means of predigesting carbohydrates, when that is necessary, just as the preparations of pepsin and pancreatic juice are used for the predigestion of protein. Ordinarily predigested foods are intended for invalids under special conditions, and for them only on the doctor's orders. The modern American breakfast foods, however, which claim to be predigested are recommended by the manufacturers for general use.

The diastaste of malt is, as has been said, supposed to change the insoluble starch in these cereal foods into more soluble forms. If sufficient malt were used under the right conditions, a considerable portion of the starch would undoubtedly be thus transformed. But this does not appear to be the case in the majority of the preparations which claim to be predigested.

In some cases the soluble carbohydrates may have been formed by the action of malt, but there is reason to believe that in certain cases soluable carbohydrates like glucose were simply added during the process of manufacture. Moreover, most of these malted goods seem to have been parched or cooked in part by dry heat, and some dextrin or other soluble carbohydrate is commonly produced from starch by dry heat without the aid of diastase. Hence it appears that in most of the malted cereals very little of the starch is converted into any soluble form other than dextrin, and that the dry heat of cooking produced at least a part of that change. Certainly the claims made for some brands that the carbohydrates are completely or largely predigested are quite unwarranted. Furthermore, it must be remembered that if the cereal foods are thoroughly cooked at home before serving, the proportion of soluble or at

least gelatinized carbohydrates formed will be fairly high, certainly as high or higher than in the predigested foods designed to be eaten raw. Malt has a characteristic taste which is relished by many, and on this account the malted cereals are often liked. Their use helps to add variety to the diet, which, as noted above, is an advantage.

It is interesting to note that a product in appearance and taste very closely resembling some of the granular specially prepared breakfast foods may be made at home by dipping small pieces of Graham bread in a dilute mixture of glucose and malt, drying in an oven, and crushing.

It seems to be the case, then, that these special cereal foods do not merit the name "predigested," and this may be an advantage rather than the reverse. It is questionable whether it would be of advantage to a healthy person to have his food artificially digested. The body under normal conditions is well adapted to utilize such foods as the ordinary mixed diet provides, among them the carbohydrates from the cereals. Moreover, it is generally believed that for the digestive organs, as for all others of the body, the amount of exercise they are normally fitted to perform is an advantage rather than the reverse. It has been said that "a well man has no more need of predigested food than a sound man has of crutches." If the digestive organs are out of order it may be well to save them work, but troubles of digestion are often very complicated affairs and the average person rarely has the knowledge needed to prescribe for himself. In general, those who are well should do their own work of digestion and those who are ill should consult a competent physician.

While breakfast foods of this class are usually not predigested, as they claim to be, they are, on the other hand, quite free from harmful ingredients and have much the same nutritive value as other preparations of similar grains and have a flavor which many like. They are on an average higher priced than the others, but aside from this considertion of economy there is no reason why those who like them should not use them as they do other ready-to-eat cereals.

For the average person, the proper cooking of cereals is as important as the proportions of different nutrients which they contain. Variations in the composition of similar brands are, as has been shown, for the most part comparatively unimportant, but it seems fair to assume that indifferent cooking affects more or less the ease of digestion and the amount of nutrients which the body can extract from a dish of cereal and at the same time detracts from the pleasure of eating. The chief purposes of cooking are: (1) to sterilize the material, so that any undesirable bacteria or parasites or their eggs if accidentally present may be rendered harmless; (2) to improve flavor and appearance; and (3) to produce such changes in structure that the digestive juices may act more readily upon the nutrients present. Heat, especially that employed in the process of manufacture, improves the keeping quality, though this is not so important in the case of cereal foods as of some other food materials, because if the grains are well cleaned and are marketed and stored under proper conditions they should be free from dirt, mold spores, insects, etc., and, furthermore, they are so dry that they do not furnish a good medium for the growth of molds, bacteria, and other low forms of vegetable life. It is interesting to note that parching as a means of improving keeping quality was practiced long before the reasons for the process were known. Thus, the American Indians often parched their corn before storing it, and indeed this practice seems to have been very generally followed since early times in most countries when it was desired to store grains or seeds or to protect them during transportation.

The second purpose of cooking, to improve flavor and appearance, has a value beyond a mere catering to the eye and the palate, since there may be a direct gain in digestibility. Appetizing foods in some way stimulate the flow of the digestive juices, while those that are eaten without relish seem to retard it.

The third purpose of cooking, to convert the nutrients into more digestible forms, is especially important in vegetable foods which, like the cereals, contain a large proportion of crude fiber. As has been stated, the nutrients of the

grain are found inside the starch-bearing and other cells, and the walls of these cells are made of crude fiber, on which the digestive juices have little effect. Unless the cell walls are broken down, the nutrients can not come under the influence of the digestive juices until the digestive organs have expended material and energy in trying to get at them. Crushing the grain in mills and making it still finer by thorough mastication breaks many of the cell walls, and the action of the saliva, and other digestive juices also disintegrates them more or less, but the heat of cooking accomplishes the object much more thoroughly. The invisible moisture in the cells expands under the action of heat, and the cell walls burst; and the water added in cooking also plays an important part in softening and rupturing them. Then, too, the cellulose itself may be changed by heat to more soluble forms. Heat also makes the starch in the cells at least partially soluble, especially when water is present. The solubility of the protein is probably as a rule somewhat lessened by cooking, especially at higher temperatures. Long, slow cooking is therefore better, as it breaks down the crude fiber and changes the starch to soluble forms without materially decreasing the solubility of the protein.

When thoroughly cooked the protecting action of the mucilaginous proteid material is overcome, and the compound starch granules are sufficiently disintegrated to allow the digestive juices to act. In other words, the increased digestibility of the thoroughly cooked cereal is supposed to be largely due to a physical change in the carbohydrates, which renders them more susceptible to the action of digestive juices. The rupturing of hard cell walls by the heat of cooking is also of importance, as was pointed out above.

Cereals differ considerably in the amount of cooking required to make them as digestible as possible, but not enough is definitely known on the subject to say exactly how long each kind should be cooked. In general, it is true that the more abundant and coarse the crude fiber the longer should be the cooking period. For this reason whole grains require longer cooking than partially crushed ones, and those containing the skin of the seed more than those from which it has been removed. For instance, whole corn kernels require longer cooking than fine hominy, and whole wheat preparations more than flour gruel. Rice, which is remarkably free from crude fiber, can be thoroughly cooked in a comparatively short time.

In the case of the partially cooked cereals it is difficult to know how much of the necessary cooking has been done at the factory. It is safe to assume that they still require at least all the cooking suggested in the directions usually accompanying the package and probably would not be harmed by considerably more. Physicians sometimes complain that these preparations are indigestible and prefer old-fashioned home-cooked grains. Yet it is hard to see why the partially cooked cereals, if they are properly recooked before serving, should not be just as digestible as those cooked entirely at home, and they certainly permit some economy in fuel and time. With all cereals it should be remembered that overcooking is unusual and harmless, while undercooking is common and undesirable.

Recent experiments on the digestibility of the protein of oatmeal indicate that this nutrient is more thoroughly digested when the meal is well cooked than when only slightly cooked, and also when the oats are rolled or malted than when simply crushed and boiled, probably because the increased heat or pressure or the action of the malt breaks down more of the cell walls.

If we consider cereals in the form in which they come on the table, we certainly get a larger proportion of nutrients from those that absorb the least water. Because it is drier a saucer of cooker rice actually has a higher food value than a like quantity of cooked oatmeal. From this it might be argued that the dry ready-to-eat cereals are preferable to those cooked at home, but this is not necessarily the case. Many persons, if they do not actually soften the dry and ready-to-eat cereal foods with hot water before serving, add considerable milk or cream to them and so make a saucerful about equal in moisture content and total food value to a like dish of any other cereal.

Doubtless the number of persons who would

care for raw cereal foods in any considerable amount is limited, but those who wish them can readily purchase cleaned raw grains which, though hard, can be masticated without any special difficulty. Raw cereal breakfast foods and other products made from the uncooked grains are also on the market, in which the hard kernel has undergone some special treatment which makes it a more convenient article of diet than the raw whole grain. It is sometimes claimed that raw foods possess special virtues because some vital principle or life force in them has not been destroyed by cooking. Such views are not supported by experimental evidence nor does physiological chemistry offer data which would warrant the belief that they are true. On the other hand, there is reason to suppose that uncooked cereal foods are unwholesome if clean and free from bacteria, and they are commonly said to be especially useful in counteracting constipation on account of the large amount of indigestible crude fiber which they supply.

The cereal breakfast foods, as a class, it seems fair to say, are ordinarily free from adulteration. Various experiment station chemists and public analysts in States having pure-food laws have examined the brands on the market, as indeed they examine all classes of food at frequent intervals, and found that as a general rule they were made from good sound grain without admixture of harmful substances. Some may be made from coarse milling products, such as wheat middlings, and some doubtless contain molasses, glucose, or other similar materials which do not appear in the manufacturer's description, but which are not injurious.

Occasionally the percentage of ash or mineral matter in breakfast foods is abnormally high, but this is apparently due to common salt added to give flavor and not as an adulterant. In general, it may be said that there is every reason to suppose that the manufacturers endeavor to use wholesome materials and that if an impurity is occasionally found in their goods it is accidental rather than intentional. Furthermore, cereal breakfast foods, as previously noted, are generally made from well-cleaned grain and are marketed in a cleanly way. In the case of the package goods the form of marketing affords special protection while the goods are in the dealer's hands and also in the household, where they are very commonly kept in the original cardboard box or package.

Just as the nutritive value of any food depends not on the total composition, but on the digestible nutrients, so its real cheapness or dearness depends not merely on the price paid in the market, or even that price plus the cost of cooking, but on the cost of the digestible nutrients it contains; or, to put it in another way, on the amount of digestible nutrients furnished for a given sum. Shoulder of beef at 12 cents a pound seems like a cheap food, and so it is compared with the more expensive cuts of meat; but it contains so much water and refuse (bones, gristle, etc.) that 10 cents spent for it will buy only about one-fifth as much actual nutrients as the same sum spent for bread.

The cereal grains are comparatively free from water and refuse, and so there is less range between their price per pound and the cost of their nutrients than is the case in other foods. The different brands of breakfast foods, however, vary greatly in price, and although, to a certain extent, these variations may be due to differences in the cost of preparation, price does not indicate very closely the nutritive value of the goods.

The average price of the wheat preparations is much higher than that of similar preparations of oats or corn.

When we consider the amount of nutrients furnished by the different cereals the order changes somewhat. Taking these facts into consideration, it can perhaps be said that the real cheapness of the cereal breakfast foods runs in the following order: Oats, corn, wheat, barley, and rice, but it must not be forgotten that the differences are comparatively slight and the order would be changed by a little variation in price or quality. The ready-to-eat preparations of any of the grains have about the same proportion of digestible nutrients as the grains from which they are made, but they are in general more expensive. Judged from the basis of food value, the higher price is paid mainly

for convenience, novelty, and the advantage, if any, due to special flavor.

The cost of labor and fuel in preparing food is always an important consideration in determining its real economy. In large establishments and in households where a fire is kept in the range all day for other purposes, it takes no extra fuel and very little labor to cook the cheap raw cereals. But if the cooking is done on a gas stove, and if time and labor are limited, it may be better economy to use the partially cooked or ready-to-eat brands. Certainly, thoroughly cooked ready-to-eat cereals are more truly economical than others eaten badly cooked. Again, if storage space is valuable the small packages in which the proprietary goods are sold have an advantage, and such goods are, under some conditions, fresher and cleaner.

The ready-to-eat cereals undoubtedly give a pleasant variety and are very convenient. If rigid economy is necessary, the cost of most sorts would seem to make their use almost out of the question when the amount of actual nutritive material supplied for a given sum is considered. Each housekeeper must decide for herself how much she can afford to pay for any special convenience and for variety.

The breakfast foods which are not cooked at the factory and flours and meals made from the same grains do not vary much in price or in composition, and whatever differences in value there may be between them depend mainly on the amount of cooking each requires. The partially cooked grains in general are cheaper per pound than macaroni and furnish the food ingredients at less cost. They probably require about the same time to cook them properly. If milk and sugar are eaten with the breakfast foods, or if cheese or other materials are added to the macaroni, these will increase the cost, but also the nutritive value of the dish. At the usual prices the nutrients in ready-to-eat cereals are considerably dearer than those furnished by bread and crackers..

The dried legumes are cheaper sources of protein than any of the cereals, but have a slightly lower fuel value than oatmeal and corn meal at corresponding prices. When cooked they are more economical than the higher-priced breakfast foods, notwithstanding the fact that they are somewhat less thoroughly digested. However, it would of course not accord with ordinary food habits to substitute legumes for cereals, and this is not intended by the comparison. All animal foods, especially meats, are more expensive even as sources of protein than cereals. The skillful housewife who wishes to provide an economical and palatable menu should bear such facts in mind in planning her meals.

To sum up the foregoing statements, cereals supply actual digestible nutrients to the body more cheaply than any other class of foods except the dried legumes. The less expensive kinds of breakfast foods are as economical as flour or the other forms of cereals with which they may be justly compared. The comparatively expensive ready-to-eat brands do not yield any extra nutritive value for their higher cost, and, so far as can be seen from the available evidences, their only advantage lies in their convenience and the pleasant variety they offer.

Drying whole-wheat or Graham bread with a little glucose and malt extract gives a product very like some of the ready-to-eat brands of breakfast foods in appearance and flavor, but it would doubtless not be worth while to prepare such foods in the household. Any stale bread may, however, be dipped in a little molasses and water, dried from twelve to twenty-four hours in the warming oven of an ordinary range, then crushed and served like the granular brands of breakfast foods. Many tests have been carried on with such home-made breakfast foods, and they seem to be quite as appetizing as the preparations which they resemble and which sell for 12.5 or 15 cents a pound.

If the labor of cooking must be taken into account, and strict economy is needful, crackers in milk may well be substituted for the ready-cooked breakfast cereals. Crackers are similar to the regular breakfast foods in composition, and at average prices furnish more nourishment for the same amount of money. Nor should it be forgotten that as a rational, palatable, and economical dish, bread and milk ranks very high,

(To be continued.)

Notes

Mr. C. Jinarajadasa's work with the branches in California comes to an end at Sacramento in the middle of June. He will then return to Chicago to continue work on his elementary book on Theosophy, for which so many illustrations have been prepared.

After next Convention, Mr. Jinarajadasa will probably go westward again by the northerly route, visiting branches in Nebraska, Montana and Washington, and go to Vancouver.

A new magazine has appeared called "Theosophy in Scotland" as the organ of the newly formed Scottish Section. The General Secretary of the section is Mr. D. Graham Pole, 105 Hanover street, Edinburgh. The annual subscription to the magazine is two shillings, sixpence, postpaid. The appearance of the little paper is most promising. We wish our brethren in their new organization a happy future.

Summer School Informal: From August 15 to September 11, which is the date of the Convention of 1911, a school will be held in Chicago for the benefit of theosophists.

There will be work from ten o'clock a. m., to five o'clock p. m., with an intermission of two hours for luncheon and classes will be established in such subjects as will be of interest to students. Leaders of the classes will be appointed and all discussions and recitations will be so conducted as to conform to the desires of the majority of the members of the classes. It will be the privilege of those who attend the school to attend such exercises of a theosophical nature as are being maintained in Chicago during this time.

There will be no expenses connected with the work except personal ones. Classes will be held in Room 827, Fine Arts Building, 203 Michigan Avenue, and as desired by the members, in the city parks.

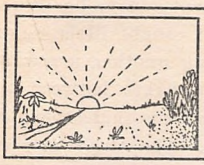
The weather in Chicago during this period is as a rule warm, but delightful and comfort can easily be obtained, especially if care is used in selecting quarters. All interested in the school and its work and who wish arrangements made for their accommodations as to board and rooms are invited to write to Mrs. Clara J. Kochersperger, 827 Fine Arts Building, Chicago.

Mr. Irving S. Cooper will sail June 7 for Europe on the Holland-American S. S. "Potsdam." After spending three months in Europe he will leave for Adyar, arriving there late in October, at the end of the hot season. Letters addressed to him at 124 John St., Ridgewood, N. J., will be forwarded. All such letters should bear a five-cent stamp.

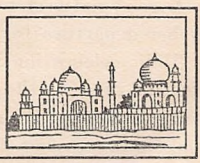
It is interesting to note that the current number of the Germana-Esperantisto, in its department of questions, has one on "What is Theosophy?" Four correspondents sent answers, two of which are given, and then the editor suggests that those who desire to study Theosophy and who know English, should read "A Primer of Theosophy," published by the American Section of the Theosophical Society, the price of which he mentions.

If Theosophists, who are not already absorbed in other useful Theosophical work, and who feel an inclination toward the Esperanto propaganda, would concentrate their energies upon keeping Theosophy before the Esperanto world, through translations of books and articles in journals, by affiliating with Esperanto organizations, attending their meetings, conventions, etc., as Theosophists, they would surely help usefully to strengthen Theosophy's place in the world. A. P. Warrington.

Anonymous communications will receive no attention.



Benares Letter



March 28, 1910.

On the 20th of this month Mrs. Besant came home to us. After a few days of hard work she paid a flying visit to Calcutta to aid an earnest worker in a crusade against cruelty to animals. In the political turmoil of the Bengali capital an unknown speaker, however talanted, can with difficulty secure a hearing. The magic of Mrs. Besant's name fills a hall to overflowing anywhere in India. Today she will give an address at the Industrial Conference of the United Provinces, now in session in Benares. At the close of the week she will start on a two weeks' lecturing tour through western India in the interests of the Central Hindu College, then she will return to Benares for a short time at least.

Last evening most of the local theosophists were invited by the leaders of the Industrial Conference to a banquet designed to promote interdining between people of the various castes and religions. Such functions are sometimes so elaborate that the guests can do no more than taste of the various dishes. The promoters said this was to be a land-mark in social reform, a breaking down of unnecessary barriers, the actual food supplied being a minor consideration. Lovers of the "simple life" at home may be interested to know a little of distinctively Indian ways. Hindus, Parsis, Mohammedans and Europeans sat in the bright moonlight in rows on a raised platform in the midst of a large tropic garden. Leaves sewn together with plant fibres constituted the plates which were placed on the bare floor. The guests sat crossed-legged on mats. The beverage was cold water in clay cups which are not used a second time. They are dashed in pieces at the close of the meal. The dishes were all Indian. Rice was purposely left off the bill of fare, otherwise many of the diners would be promptly outcasted by their co-religionists. Perfect liberty is allowed as regards fruit, a Brahmin may take fruit from a Pariah's hand. Freedom of choice may be exercised regarding a large number of articles, but modern custom is opposed to interdining between even the nearest sects. After-dinner speeches showed that considerable courage was exercised by the Hindu guests. Social ostracism might be the result, At least two of those present were already outcasted by foreign travel, they having been educated in Europe.

This week the annual festival called "Holi" was celebrated. This to western people is probably the least interesting of all the Hindu festival times. It lasts two days, during which schools are closed and most other such public activities are suspended. It is the Hindu equivalent for the Roman Saturnalia or the Italian and French carnival season. It reminds us of the "dipper fights" or the Hallowe'en performances of our childhood days. Holi is for the amusement of children, old or young, and is tolerated by others as an unavoidable nuisance.

The frolic really begins in the evening. Fires are lighted in various places, around which merry-makers gather for the exchange of jokes and the singing of songs. In some parts of India cocoanuts are roasted in these fires and eaten while seated around. As Holi is a time of license, the jokes and the songs are often below the proper standard. Troops of low class people go about the streets throwing on those they meet handfuls of colored powder or cups of liquid dye. Many colors are used, red being most in evidence. Battles are fought until all those engaged are covered with dye from head to foot. The colors are of vegetable origin, harmless to the eyes and skin.

Students find Holi a pleasant diversion after the strain of months of routine work. They start out with clean, white muslin garments and are a sight to behold on their return. Sometimes they go to the house of a friend and order him to come out. If he refuses they will lie in wait and catch him sooner or later.

A good natured young governess on the eve of her departure for England, was coaxed into a Holi celebration in the Zenana quarters. She told me that the variegated condition of her hair made her an object of wonder and astonishment to her fellow-passengers.

Like all Hindu festivals, Holi has a religious origin lost sight of during these degenerate days. Of course there is a story. It is said that the greatest of yogis was to be tempted to test his power of self control. Some of the devas conspired to create in him an earthly desire. Failing by ordinary means to distract his attention from his tapas, they sent the god of kamic desire, who hidden near by sent an arrow through the heart of the great yogi while he was sitting in meditation. Feeling the dart and angered that the result of all his tapas was thus to be swept away, he looked about for the culprit, and caught little Kama Deva in the act of aiming another arrow at him. Then from the agni chakra between his eyes, he sent forth a fierce flame that consumed the god of unholy desire. The observance of the festival was to bring into ordinary life that which the story symbolized. The wood, which should be gathered from various places represented evil desires and their resultant bad karma. The fire applied to the wood is the turning of the light of reason on these desires to burn them up. At least once a year man should give himself up to self-examination and burn up his evil desires. The color, which should be only fiery red, is likewise the flame sent by the great yogi against his arch enemy.

S. E. Palmer.



Dear Friend:

Many thanks for your letter lately received. My work will keep me west of Chicago all through the summer months, and so I shall not be able to come to your organization. Certainly I could modify my plans to be in Chicago about July, and so come to you for August, but I do not think it will be worth while doing so, for the following reasons: As you well know, I have warmly sympathized with your work, and have considered that much good comes from it; but its general trend is mostly in a vague "New Thought" direction, although the breadth it offers is just what is required to give a temporary halting place to many out of orthodoxy. When I have come to your place, I have talked on general, broad lines of philosophy, keeping as much as possible in the background the characteristic theosophical ideas. I know I have been fully appreciated, and that many like what I have to say. But times are changing, and with them very largely my work. To be frank, I have no more time to speak on mere generalities, and as a worker carrying out certain parts of the plans of the Masters, I, and others working definitely in the Theosophical Society, are expected to bring certain results in the world of thought within a given time. Now, these results, so far as my work is concerned, can be brought about by my strictly confining myself to talk Theosophy, and nothing else but Theosophy. I mean by this not mere vague philosophic truths, but more such precise Theosophic truths as lead aspirants into the life of discipleship. This country is so huge, and our American Section, now with its hundred branches, requires so much attention, that unless any other organization is willing to listen to what I have to say concerning Theosophy and Occultism, I should hardly be doing my duty in turning away from the work of the branches to help even such an excellent work as that of the movement to which you are giving your time.

To put things again frankly, all these years when I have come to your friends I have been speaking things that they like to hear; but I feel now, if I come to them, it would be my duty to tell them things that they do not like

to hear, such as Karma, and Reincarnation, and Astral Bodies, and various other things which are necessary to know to lead to the path of discipleship. Now I know that those strictly Theosophical things would not be palatable, nor would seem unsectarian enough to some. But, nevertheless, my first work is to proclaim just these very ideas, that thousands in this country are eager to listen to. I still think that your organization will have its part to play in the world of thought, but there are many people who can talk there on general lines of philosophy, but very few to take up the special work of the Theosophical Society.

I feel more and more now that every ounce of energy must be devoted to the one organization I am with, which it is our duty to prepare for a special purpose in connection with the coming once again to us in physical form of the Christ. So far as I see my work ahead for another year, I shall be in the West and Middle West, and shall not be near Boston until the end of next year. I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

C. Jinarajadasa.

LOVE'S SPELL.

Look at thy Brother Man!
  Lov'st him well?
Is he the world to thee,
  Dear Love's spell?

Bitterer than death's ill,
  Scorns he thee?
Writhest in hate's grip,
  Never free?

Each is a mystery,
  Thou must solve;
If today thou canst not,
  Must evolve!

Watch thou God's handiwork!
  Is it strife?
Terrible mockery,
  Death with life?

Beginning and ending,
  Love and hate,
Doing and undoing,
  Will and Fate,

Knowledge and mystery,
  Man and clod,
Present and the future—
  Dreams of God!

G. K.



The Field



Chicago.

Although it has been some months now since Chicago Lodge has sent in any report of its activities, the duties which it has been given to do in the Theosophic movement of today have been fulfilled in the usual, energetic and thorough manner. Not the least of these duties seems to be the propagation of its species by budding, a method so characteristic of the earliest races of mankind. And like the physical immortality of those early races, so does Chicago Lodge remain as healthy and as much alive as ever, a fact which, according to its horoscope, is no doubt due to the strong Taurus influence under which it was born. The latest offsprings of this sturdy mother-lodge are the Adyar and Annie Besant Lodges of Chicago and the H. P. B. Lodge of Grand Rapids. Both the president and vice president of the last mentioned center have been members of Chicago Lodge. This is by no means a hint for her to do so. We are simply glad to acknowledge her association with us.

An outline of our lodge activities in the form of study classes held at the Rooms, 426 26 Van Buren street, on Wednesdays, is as follows: 3 p. m., Evolution on the Earth Chain. This is in the form of a romance, in manuscript, read to the class by Mrs. Randall. 4 p. m., Theosophy in Ancient Literature—Dr. Bonggren. 5 p. m., Physics in the "Secret Doctrine"—Mr. Alling. 6:45 p. m., Study of the Manuals; at present "The Astral plane." 8 p. m, Lodge meeting—"The Ancient Wisdom."

On Saturdays, at 3 p. m., Mrs. Hill and Mrs. West have charge of a class studying "The Changing World." Some of the members of this class make it a point to be at the Rooms nearly an hour earlier to discuss in an informal manner various social problems in the light of Theosophy. From 4 to 5 p. m., tea is served, adding a touch of sociability to the afternoon's intellectual menu.

The secretary of the Lodge has had the pleasure all fall and winter of conducting a class at her own home, several miles away from the downtown center, which class has been studying "The Pedigree of Man." In a city like Chicago, where distances are so great, it seems strange that not more local study classes have been conducted at the homes of members. Our president, Mr. Alling, last year urged the formation of such classes in various parts of the city as an effective means for the spread of Theosophy as well as for study among the members.

The Sunday evening public lectures at the rooms for propaganda purposes have been given since the New Year by Mr. Ransom H. Randall and have been well attended. Mr. Randall has the happy faculty of so presenting our philosophy that it may be easily understood by the general public. His subjects for the next three months are: Good Health and Longevity; Development of the Human Race; Animal Evolution; Personality and Individuality; Behind the Scenes of Nature; Occult Astronomy; World Saviors and Adept Teachers; The Source and Need of Avatars; Unseen Influences; Production of Psychic Phenomena; World Periods; Music as a Factor in Evolution.

Mention should also be made of a mystic recital from Tennyson with musical accompaniment given under the auspices of Chicago Lodge by one of its newer members, Mrs. Andrews Allen. The hearty thanks of the members is due Mrs. Allen for this delightful entertainment. It was given under very trying circumstances. The taxicab, which was taking Mrs. Allen to the hall, broke down, thus unavoidably making her late, which was very annoying to her. At the same time her mind and heart were concerned with the severe illness of her father, who died but a few days later. Theosophy must surely have given her comfort in this bereavement.

Julia K. Sommer.

Pittsburg.

Pittsburg Lodge, during the last year was particularly successful in the furthering of a carefully matured plan.

As the majority of our members are young in Theosophy, our president, who is a theosophical student of many years, and who has been a close observer of methods in many countries, and who has had also a wide experience as an organizer along commercial and other lines, urged us to become students before we attempted to be teachers, climbers rather than guide posts. His idea for us from the first was quiet, autonomous growth until a stable center should be estblished, after which active propaganda was to follow, but in the meantime doing all in our power to interest, in the study, those who came within our sphere of influence.

Pittsburg is called the Iron City, and a little of her iron seemed to have entered into some of her people, so that they are inclined to be rather inflexible along many lines; but we all know what wonders can be accomplished by the careful and intelligent manipulation of iron. Our city is a great manufacturing center, but she is also becoming a center along scientific and artistic lines.

So, in spite of the temptation to sally forth in brilliant, if premature, attack upon our prospective territory, we held to the original idea, possessed our ("group") soul in patience while our effort was to fuse the personalities of the members into a harmonious whole, and try to avoid as much as possible the mistakes incidental to the inexperienced.

Pittsburg is a hustling city, and those few of her citizens whose liberality, progressiveness, and intuitiveness led them into the Society, had for the most part energy and capacity for work. Good material, but our task was to get that material into shape, and while we are not a source of wide-eyed astonishment to our community at large, we have learned to work together. In September last, our president, by a series of public lectures inaugurated our propaganda work in our handsome new lodge rooms.

We have four regular meetings a week—an open study class on Thursday evening studying "The Growth of the Soul," a class for beginners on Tuesday evening, a closed class on Sunday afternoon using "The Science of the Emotions" and an open Sunday evening meeting at which members are giving a series of original lectures.

Our library of 225 volumes is well used At Christmas we disposed of three dozen "Spiritual Life for the Man of the World." Recently we distributed nearly sixteen hundred of the Rogers lecture "What Theosophy Is." We have disposed of fifty Primers since Christmas and are giving out 100 Messengers a month. From time to time we also send out circulars intended to keep the theosophical ball rolling in our district.

During the fiscal year 1908-9 our membership of thirty-four was increased by twenty-one new members, but twelve were demitted to form the Iron City Lodge.

Since our report at that time, we have had fourteen new members. One of the centers connected with us, Meadville, has formed a lodge, seven of whose members were demitted from our membership. Two demitted members are active in the newly formed Baltimore Lodge. We have members in Harrisburg, Washington, Pa., Sutersville and various Pittsburg suburbs.

Each one of our centers is in study work, and in spreading the knowledge of what Theosophy is and what the members of the Society stand for.

Los Angeles.

White Lotus Day was observed by the Los Angeles Branch with the following program: Piano solo, Mrs. Goldsberry; address, Mr. Holland; reading from "The Song Celestial;" song, Dr. Quick; address, Miss Marie Walsh; address, Mrs. Baverstock; reading from "The Light of Asia," Mr. Scudder; piano solo, Mrs. Goldsberry; reading from "The Voice of the Silence," Mrs. Wallis; obituary address on Mrs. Clara Giddings (who passed away April 23, 1910, Mrs. Hammon. Mrs. G. E. Ross.

San Diego.

Mr. Jinarajadasa visited San Diego from March 17 to March 31 and was well received by the San Diego public. He delivered six public lectures under the auspices of the lodge, one under the auspices of the Channing Club, and one under the auspices of the La Jolla Social Club, at La Jolla, a seaside resort fourteen miles from San Diego. All the lectures were well attended, the hall being filled to its seating, and sometimes to its standing, capacity, and on one occasion its was unable to accommodate the attendance, and many were turned away. It was especially gratifying to the lodge to have him invited to lecture by the Channing Club and the Social Club at La Jolla, for heretofore it has been impossible to interest any of the organizations in our lodge or our lecturers, but we notice a growing change since Mrs. Besant's visit in September.

He gave a private lecture every afternoon or evening, there was no public lecture. These also in attendance exhausted the seating capacity of the parlors in which they were held, one meeting numbering almost eighty present. After his visit a new Beginners' Class (there being already one) was organized with fifteen in attendance at the first meeting. A larger hall than the lodge headquarters has been secured for the Sunday public lectures and the lodge is putting forth every effort to make use of the great help given it by Mr. Jinarajadasa's visit. Effie B. Alexander, Secretary.

Toledo Ohio.

In the last few months we have felt an improvement in our branch. New members are coming in and great interest is being taken in our Saturday afternoon study-class. We have an average attendance of about twenty and our public meetings held once a month are very well attended. I think our work promises much for the future. The officers elected for the year are: President, Mrs. T. R. Lemmon; vice president, Mr. T. Christiancy; secretary, Mrs. Marion D. Freeman; treasurer, Mr. Laurence Ketchem; press-agent, Mrs. Addie White, and librarian, Mrs. M. Adkins. Mrs. Addie White.

San Francisco.

Mr. C. Jinarajadasa reached San Francisco from San Diego on the morning of April 2, and departed for Santa Cruz on the 30th. During the four weeks' interval, he labored untiringly in our midst, and all earnest students cannot but feel gratitude and deep appreciation for the service he has rendered them and the cause of Theosophy. The Sunday night lectures, with stereopticon, were instructive and helpful, as well to the general public as to the older students. On every Tuesday and Thursday evening, also, public lectures were given to large audiences, winning general approbation. The lectures for members only, delivered before the San Francisco Lodge on Friday evenings, were perhaps the most illuminative for those who have studied.

On each Monday during the month, in company with one or more of the faithful, Mr. Jinarajadasa journeyed to San Jose, where he organized an afternoon class, and, in the evening, delivered lectures to audiences averaging about one hundred. The outcome of this work is a study class, which will be conducted by one of our San Francisco members, and which, we trust, will later evolve into a lodge.

During his visit, Mr. Jinarajadasa spoke at some forty-one meetings, working to the limit of his strength. Many new people have been attracted to our Theosophical teachings, and many who heard Mrs. Besant lecture, and have since been studying and reading, have been guided a little further along through Mr. Jinarajadasa's efforts. As was to be expected, those who have been seriously studying for some time are those who have received most. But, whether inquirers, new students, or members, all have grown in knowledge, in earnestness of purpose, in devotion and zeal for the work, and we hope that the powers who guide the Section will send Mr. Jinarajadasa to us soon again. The Pacific Coast needs lecturers and teachers; for the field is large, the people being mostly broad-minded and eager for knowledge. Our climate, too, is mild and even (much more like Ceylon than that of the Eastern States), and as California is to play an important part in the formation of the sixth sub-race, why could it not be arranged

for Mr. Jinarajadasa to make his headquarters here? This is the earnest desire of all sincere workers for Theosophy with whom I have discussed the matter. W. J. W.

San Francisco.

The San Francisco lodge united with the lodges of Oakland and Berkeley in a joint celebration of White Lotus Day, at the suggestion of Mr. C. Jinarajadasa. The program consisted of the usual readings, requested by our Teacher, from "The Light of Asia" and "The Bhagavad Gita," and a eulogy of departed workers delivered by Mr. Jinarajadasa. Then followed a presentation of the play prepared by Dr. Van Hook, "The Promise of the Christ's Return," the dramatis personae being as follows: Abraham, a Jewish Scholar, Mr. W. J. Walters; Seti, a wandering Egyptian student, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa; Julius, a Roman warrior, Mr. Darwin A. Allen. All acquitted themselves admirably, and the audience, which completely filled the hall, was much gratified. There seemed to be a general uplift of heart and mind, and if any in the audience had ever had the idea that Theosophy is antagonistic to the teachings of Jesus, they must have altered their view. As one gentleman expressed it, "That is the best exposition of the teachings of the Christ to which I have ever listened." Between the acts, Mr. Theodor Salmon, a pianist of exceptional talent and ability, furnished exquisite music. Altogether, the entire entertainment was like a beautiful poem, and the effect produced was gratifying. The ladies of the lodge had decorated the platform most artistically with a profusion of white blossoms, a large portrait of H. P. B. occupying the center of the stage. May other lodges, who are fortunate enough to have Mr. Jinarajadasa to help them in the future, present this beautiful little play to the public, that they may learn that the Wisdom is in perfect accord with the teachings of the Christ, as well as all the other Great Teachers of the world. C. B. W.

After two preliminary talks to the members and friends of Vivelius Lodge, my first public lecture in Detroit was given in the Church of the New Thought, on Winder street. About 171 people listened to the lecture on "The Unseen World and How We Study It." This church is a fair sized building of pleasing exterior, holding about four hundred people. Over the door is cut the inspiring motto, "Eternal Progress." Two other public lectures and several class talks were given, all of them well attended.

On Monday, January 10, I left on the electric for Port Huron, Mich. A public lecture—the first ever given along theosophical lines in that city—brought out an audience of eighty-five. A class talk was given every afternoon thereafter until on the fourth day a lodge of seventeen people was organized. This result is due largely to the efforts of Mrs. S. A. Peck, who, for the past year, had gathered around her a small but earnest class of students. Many a member, living in a city or a suburb where no lodge exists, might be equally successful if they only had courage enough to start a class.

My next stop was in Akron, Ohio, where four public lectures and nine talks were given during the week. In spite of bad weather, the audiences were fair and quite sympathetic, while the parlor of Mr. A. Ross Read was crowded at every public class meeting. Prof. O. E. Olin, of Buchtel College, asked me to address his class in psychology, and accordingly, early one Wednesday morning, I spoke on the "Psychology of Dreams." The president of the college attended, and every seat in the small room was filled.

I left Saturday, January 22, during a snowstorm, for Meadville, Pa., and was met at the station by our earnest brother, Mr. Frank L. Reed. During the last year or so, Mr. Reed had organized and conducted a class, and as a result, six of its members became associated with a distant lodge. As yet, however, Meadville was without a lodge, and Mr. Reed had asked me to come, hoping thereby that one might be organized. In addition to several talks to members and their friends, four public lectures were given in the court house, at which both the attendance increased and the

quality of the people improved. On January 28, a lodge of twelve was organized, at which meeting I spoke to the members on "The Significance of the T. S."

Two weeks were spent in Buffalo. The lodge was fortunate in securing an excellent room for its public work, and the audiences which came out were of good size. Several of our lodges are badly handicapped because their headquarters are uninviting, and it seems sometimes that if a strenuous effort were made, this condition might be remedies. While in Buffalo I gave one lecture before the "International Progressive Thought League."

I look back upon my visit to Rochester with a great deal of pleasure. Every detail was looked after so carefully, and the joint committees of the two lodges coöperated together so harmoniously that no hitch occurred during the entire engagement. The public lectures were held in the Unitarian Church, while the class talks were divided between the lodge rooms. One commendable feature at the public lectures was the excellent music. It was evident that the committee in charge of this work realized the great value of music as a means of harmonizing the audiences. Despite friendly competition in the shape of lectures every evening by the well-known speaker, Benjamin Fay Mills, the attendance at the lectures was quite good. I spent a very pleasant day in Albion, N. Y., chatting with one of our devoted members, Rev. Chas. H. Vail, who is the pastor of the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church.

Utica was reached on February 20. At the request of a few theosophical students living there, I gave some half-dozen public lectures, at which the attendance ranged between thirty and forty. Although Utica is very conservative, a lodge of ten people was organized the day before I left for Albany.

In Albany four public lectures and two class talks were given. The hall was crowded every evening and some fourteen people signified their intention of joining a beginner's class.

A long ride on March 12 carried me over the Canadian line to Montreal. I had been warned that this city was very conservative, and that the power of the churches, particularly the Catholic, was almost medieval. I also found, later, that the French and Irish sections of the city were very large, and that the English were in the minority. I could then appreciate the great difficulties under which the lodge had been struggling in its efforts to spread theosophic thought. Despite these handicaps, however, an average of eighty people came out to each public lecture, although an admission of 25 cents was charged. The newspapers were fairly liberal, and one, considered the most orthodox, gave us excellent notices and write-ups, even asking a minister of the Anglican Church to report the lecture on "Reincarnation," which he did. I may add that he came out to the next lecture and later put down his name to become a member of the beginner's class. About twenty-four people, I was told, signed up to come into this class. This was the first time that theosophical lectures had been given in Montreal. I gave one lecture on "The Building of the Temple" before the Vegetarian Society of Canada.

Holyoke was reached on March 19, after another long ride through the mountains of Vermont. One public lecture and eight parlor talks were given. The people seemed very much in earnest and were quite sympathetic. Holyoke Lodge has done more to awaken interest in Theosophy in surrounding towns and cities within a radius of fifty miles or so, than any other lodge I have come to know on my travels.

While writing this report, I am just winding up my work in Springfield, Mass. There is manifest interest here in Theosophy. The lectures have been well attended. Last night about 135 people filled the vestry of the Unitarian Church to hear about "The Justice of Reincarnation," and at one class talk over fifty were present.

And now to sum up. Since January 1st I have spoken ninety-seven times, making a total of 203 lectures since the commencement of this trip on October 1. Twelve cities and towns have been visited, and three lodges organized. My expenses have averaged about $50 per month and have been met entirely by donations from lodges and individuals.

Irving S. Cooper.

Chicago Lodge.

On Thursday evening, February 8, Mrs. Margaret Allen gave a reading of Tennyson's "Guinevere" to musical setting by Mr. Heriot Levy, in Recital Hall.

Invitations were extended by Chicago Lodge to all members of the Theosophical Society and their friends in and about the city.

A large and appreciative audience listened to Mrs. Allen's interpretation of Tennyson in the tragic struggle of Queen Guinevere, portraying that great human struggle bewteen the emotional and the spiritual natures in which the emotional triumphs for a time only to yield the final victory to the spiritual, the Higher Self.

The mystic meaning of the poem and the fine touches in the descriptions of nature and nature spirits, were brought out effectively by the musical accompaniment, composed and rendered by Mr. Levy. Mrs. Kate Giles Hill.

Newark.

At the yearly election of Newark Lodge the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: Mr. Richard M. Dubs, President; Mr. Arthur E. Holmes, Vice President; Mrs. Lucette H. Colvin, Secretary and Treasurer, and Miss Edith M. Williams, Librarian.

CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

(1) What is it that draws the soul back to rebirth? (Page 42.); (2) How can a man while still living a life of action free himself from the binding effects of action? (Page 42.); (3) Why is it that even desire for the joys of Heaven bind a man? (Page 43.); (4) In how far is the achievement of liberation possible for a man who seeks to break the bonds of desire from a purely personal and selfish motive? (Page 44.); (5) What is the difference between the aims and methods of the type of person alluded to in question four, and those of the would-be disciple? (Page 45-9); (6) To what is it that the great religious Teachers appeal when proclaiming a truth without argument they are believed? (Page 48); (7) What is the first qualification for discipleship?; (8) What does this mean, and how does the self-control needed for discipleship differ from that usually regarded as sufficient by the man of the world? (Pages 50, 57-9); (9) Why is control of mind so important a qualification? (Pages 56-7); (10) What practical difficulty does the would-be disciple meet with when he begins to study mind control? (Page 59.); (11) How can this difficulty be overcome? (Page 59-63.); (12) What is "Meditation"? (Page 63.); (13) Explain how it is possible for a man to live a life of constant meditation without neglecting his duties as a member of ordinary society? (Page 65-6); (14) How is intellectual meditation used in character building? (Page 66-70); (15) What great happening crowns the efforts of one who has done all in his power to fit himself for discipleship? (Page 70-73).

June Questions on Man and His Bodies. Pages 40-49.

(1) Describe the constitution of the astral body. (2) How can the astral body be improved? (3) What is the human aura? (4) What is the effect of food on the astral body? (5) What are the possibilities of the astral body? (6) What is the meaning of the word *yoga* and what are the purposes of *yoga?*

Esoteric Christianity. June Questions. Pages 42-51.

Explain the difference, if any, between Esoteric Christianity and Occult Christianity. Is there any evidence to prove that Christianity ever had a hidden side to its philosophy? What do we know of the early Christian Fathers, those not named in the New Testament? Has the Inner teaching been denied individual members of the Church? Did Jesus leave His disciples at His death? What is the esoteric meaning of the phrase, "The Kingdom of God?" Give the esoteric meaning of "Salvation." Name some parallel phrases in the teachings of the Christ and those of the Buddha. Why do so few in number enter in at the "strait gate?" Explain the esoteric meaning of the word "Perfect" and give one or more scriptural references using the word.

Send answers to David S. M. Unger, 334 Dearborn Street, Chicago.

Papers on Elementary Theosophy by L. W. Rogers

REINCARNATION AND EVOLUTION.

(Continued.)

Since both the materialistic theory and the hypothesis that souls are a sudden creation fail to explain evolutionary progress, we are compelled to look further for a solution. Turning to the hypothesis of reincarnation, we find that it successfully meets the tests by which the soundness of any working hypothesis is determined. No fact of life has yet been discovered that is in conflict with it, no fact that its advocates cannot account for by its terms. Every once in a while we hear it said by somebody that, although reincarnation seems reasonable enough as an explanation of the origin and progress of the race, it nevertheless cannot be absolutely proven. Neither can the nebular hypothesis in the physical evolution of worlds be absolutely proven, as we prove things in mathematics and chemistry; but it is considered soundly scientific, and it must stand until somebody discovers a fact that it is not able to harmonize with all the other facts we know about that subject. So far as the old notion of sudden creation is concerned, it explains absolutely nothing and cannot be entertained for a moment. So far as materialism is concerned, there is a growing list of phenomena in the presence of which it is helpless, and every advance in psychology is certain to increase its difficulties. A quarter of a century ago its advocates spoke with confidence on points about which there was too little known to disprove their position. The burden of proof was on those who held that a human being survives bodily death, and the absence of definite knowledge on the subject left the materialistic hypothesis unshaken. Intuition is not evidence to the skeptic. But the advance of the last couple of decades has turned the tables. New discoveries in various directions have brought forth facts which before the hypothesis of materialism completely breaks down. Putting aside the great array of evidence from those who have had personal proof of one kind or another that confirms the theory of the continuity of consciousness, we still have in two directions alone, in experimental hypnotism and in the advance made in brain surgery, quite enough to silence materialism. No one can read such books as "Brain and Personality"—not the work of a theosophist to support his hypothesis, but of a great surgeon and brain specialist to set forth new discoveries—without being impressed with the fact that this forward movement in science is confirming theosophy and giving the materialist problems against which his hypothesis is shattered into bits.

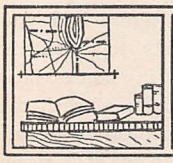
And thus it happens that materialism is steadily losing ground in the scientific world. It can really lay claim to but one famous scientist today, and he became famous not because he was a philosopher, but because he was a good naturalist. It is worthy of note, too, that he is old,—has reached the age when it seems impossible to either accept a new idea or lose an old one. In only one way can such a position as the scientific materialist holds be consistently retained in the face of the accumulating facts in psychology, and that is by calmly denying them! But there is another danger to which one with an unsound hypothesis is liable, and that is that since his hypothesis is not in harmony with the facts of nature, he must sooner or later, if he writes much, make statements of obvious truths that will not fit his own theory. He is like a witness in court who covers considerable ground in his testimony. He may be purposely and cleverly lying, or he may be quite unconsciously making an untrue statement, which he really thinks to be the truth. But in either case, the cross-questioner will in time bring the contradiction to the surface; for a truth will fit every other truth, while an error can be proven such by its failure to harmonize

with and sustain the known facts. And just this embarrassment seems to have befallen the chief exponent of materialistic philosophy; for now comes Thompson with his "A New Reading of Evolution," in which, to the general discomfort of materialistic thought, he quotes Haeckel against Haeckel!

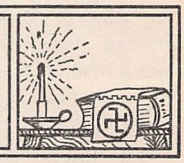
But is it worth while to give much time to materialism? There is one kind of it that will doubtless be distressingly slow in dying—the kind that rejects what it calls materialism, but paves the spiritual world with golden bricks and makes the music of the spheres depend upon stringed instruments—but scientific materialism is nearly a dead issue. A new hypothesis of human existence is challenging the investigation of the scientific mind and it is beginning to compel respectful attention not only because of its inherent reasonableness, but also because it no longer has a logical competitor in the field. This old-young hypothesis is itself a reincarnation, and the period known as the Dark Ages was its night of death in the western world.

In a previous article, the insufficiency of the sudden-creation theory was discussed; and when we put both that and materialism aside, there is nothing left us but the hypothesis of reincarnation. But does it really illuminate the problem and explain the riddles of life? We hope to show that it does. At first thought it is likely to repel some just because it is so foreign to their ideas on the subject. It is remarkable how difficult it is for most of us to adjust ourselves to a new idea. It took the world hundreds of years to get used to the idea of the rotundity of the earth and its movement through space. Only very, very slowly did so simple a truth of nature win its way against the set ideas to the contrary. It was not, of course, because there was any flaw in the hypothesis, but simply because there had been centuries of erroneous belief on the subject, or else no thought about it at all. And that is just the case with reincarnation. The people have thought little or nothing about the origin of life. As children, they were taught the popular notions on the subject, and accepted them as a matter of course. And now when a scientific conception is presented to them, it is as startling as the ideas of Galileo and Columbus must have been to the people of their time.

(To be continued.)



Current Literature



The beginnings of Theosophy in Holland were very difficult: we had to do with a nation that does not take readily to new ideas, and there has been no literature to fall back upon. When I came to Amsterdam to visit the President of the Dutch-Belgian branch there were about six members resident there, two or three in other parts of Holland, and three in Belgium. The latter soon dropped out, language and customs dividing the two nations to much. Of the remaining Dutch members only three could read English or French, the only languages in which the existent Theosophical literature was written. I knew no Dutch, and offered my room for meetings as the only thing I could do. We met every week and read and discussed, the book was in English, the reading and discussion in Dutch. It seemed a hopeless beginning. Mr. Fricke once said he thought there was hope for Theosophy in Holland because four of us were in earnest. Shortly afterwards one of the four left the T. S., but three who will give all do make a centre round which others can gather and form a channel through which the life can flow. And I have always looked on it as a proof of the immense power at the back of the Society that with such poor instruments converse at first with difficulty with a mixture in this country.

Madame Meuleman was the inspiring force then as later, but in these early days, though

she had great psychic gifts and much intuition, she knew little of Theosophy from books; later on she learned English sufficiently to understand it and to make herself intelligible. When I used to sigh that I could do so little, she always said: "Learn Dutch." We used to converse at firts with difficulty with a mixture of French and German. She had known French but had forgotten it from want of practice, and I well remember my intense astonishment when I called to see her a few months after I had settled in Amsterdam. We had been struggling bravely with the language, and only half understanding each other, when she suddenly shut her eyes; then opening them and looking at me very seriously she spoke French quite easily for about half-an-hour; then, having said what she wanted, she sighed deeply and woke up and found her tea was cold! The French had gone again, and as it was the first time I had ever seen anyone go into a trance it was a great surprise. She upset a good many of my pet theories in the course of the next few years and brought me into touch with a world I had not even believed in. I learnt more from her than from books, for she brought me into touch with the life side of nature. Often when poring over the "Secret Doctrine" the meanings seemed ever to elude me. If she came in and in my broken Dutch I tried to translate the difficulty she was always able to make it plain and often to fill in details.

Our first great event was a request for a lecture on Theosophy in 1891. Mr. Fricke, who was the only person possible, had never lectured in his life, and required much pressing. (He has just returned from a successful tour in South Africa.) After he had lectured in several places, and here and there found someone who was interested. We translated the first two manuals when they came out, and distributed 2,000 without any apparent effect. The newspapers would not accept any notices on Theosophy; they once published an attack on Mme. Blavatsky and refused a reply. Yet the movement was growing. Once a month we took a hall for a pulic meeting, and several times English members came over to help us. Among these were Mrs. Besant, Herbert Burrows, Mrs. Oakley, Mr. Mead, and later Countess Wachtmeister. I remember how delight we were when our numbers reached 40—then 100; and also how we hailed the arrival of women members—at first there was such a large majority of men. Now the tide has turned, and we have more women than men, and among the former some of our best lecturers and workers.

But no one among us has a tenth part of the power that made Mme. Meuleman such an inspiring force to the whole section. Her lectures were always crowded, and she seemed to lift her audience to a higher level, so that they felt, for a time at least, the reality of the things of which she spoke.

Our branch was scarcely a year old when we started our magazine Theosophia, in a very modest form, filled at first almost entirely with translations, in order to bring some of the important Theosophical works within the reach of the Dutch-speaking public. In 1892 we started headquarters, where for some months Mr. Fricke, the Meuleman and I resided alone, but gradually our numbers grew, and younger people better fitted into work among the public gathered round us. All of us look back with pleasure to those days when Madame Meuleman was the central figure and young and old worked harmoniously together. For, however we might differ in non-essential points, we were absolutely sure of each other on the main point, our whole-hearted devotion to Theosophy. The headquarters still remain, though the dramatis personœ have changed from time to time. The Theosophical Society in Holland now numbers over 1,000 members. The Dutch nation may be slow to accept new ideas,—they do not like to go, as their proverb has it, "over one night's ice"—but having seen a truth they are loyal and true till death. Theosophy in Holland is still growing, and when we, who had the great good fortune and happiness to work at the beginning of Theosophy here, shall have passed away, Theosophy will remain, safeguarded in the hearts and lives of the members of the Society, because, for a large proportion of them, Theosophy has become a living power in their lives.

E. Windust.

—From Theosophy in Scotland.

Children's Page

THE TWO BROTHERS.

He lay nigh unto death, the little dark-eyed lad, as he sobbed his heart out in his empty, silent room—empty with the emptiness of loss, silent with the silence of the grave. Eleven years only had he of life, but the little life held a great love. In a huge, rambling, ancient house he lived with his brother, a boy three years his elder; they were bright, handsome lads, overflowing with life and mirth, and the long, gloomy passages rang with the echo of their laughter; fearless and strong, the elder led in everything; they rode, fished, rambled, romped together, and the younger loved the elder with the clinging idolatrous devotion seen now and again in childhood, the devotion that has in it a strange presaging of future loves, of those of youth to the lady of his dreams, of soldier to leader, of disciple to master, of saint to God. And now?—but a few days back, the elder, Lancelot, had been carried home with the sobs of strong men, warm-hearted peasants, over the broken form stretched limp and helpless on a hurdle, for the young rider had fallen from his favorite pony, and his life was crushed out—he was dead. What skills it to tell of Walter's passionate unbelief, his frantic cries, his storm of tears, his wild clinging to the dead hands that answered not, his piteous appeal to the dead ears that heard not. And now they had taken Lancelot away, away to the cold earth on which September leaves were dropping, dark and sodden; away to be lonely in the churchyard as Walter was lonely in the home.

Worn out by exhaustion, the child would take neither food nor drink; why should he take an unshared meal, dainties of which Lancelot was deprived? In vain mother and nurse pleaded, argued, and at last blamed. It was wicked to rebel against the will of God, selfish withal to wail and moan; his brother was happy with God and the angels in heaven, perfectly happy, content. At this the child broke out again in passionate revolt: "He is not happy, he is as miserable as I am; he is crying for me as I for him. He doesn't want the angels, he wants me. He wants me, I tell you; angels don't understand boys. And you don't know where he is," he sobbed in a new burst of anguish. "You've sent him away. He's out in the cold, perhaps, somewhere. You don't know, you don't know!"

The shocked mother, conventionally religious, broke in with pious remonstrance: "Walter, it is wicked to talk like this. God is all-powerful, and can make your brother happy anywhere."

"He can't! he can't!" cried the child. "Lance can't be happy without me. He never was, and he isn't now. He took me with him everywhere. He's trying to find me now, and he's crying, I know."

"But you will die if you donot eat, alannah, heart of my heart," said the nurse, her heart torn for her foster-child.

"I want to die," wailed the boy, "and then wherever Lance is, I'll be, too. Leave me alone! leave me alone!"

And now he lay exhausted on his bed, in the room where no brother slept beside him, sleepless as he had been sleepless since he was alone, but too worn to cry aloud; only long moans shuddered through him, and a sharp sob shook him now and then.

"He gives His angels charge of those who sleep,
But He Himself watcheth with those who wake."

A boy was passing in the world that dim eyes call invisible, a boy whose service in past lives to Those we term Masters of Compassion had called him to take up again service in the very dawn of youth. In earth-life they called him Cyril, and his body had counted but ten years. Drawn by the piteous anguish of the lonely child, he paused beside his bed, and found beside it also the lost brother Lancelot vainly trying to make himself heard or felt. Cyril's first effort was to comfort Lancelot, and quickly he told him that help should come; and then he turned to the poor despairing child imprisoned in the flesh, and tried to pour into his heart some comfort. But vain were his best efforts, for Walter's grief-wrecked mind was too storm-tossed for any thought-suggestion to enter in. Keener and keener grew his ineffectual sympathy, stronger and stronger his longing to aid and console, until love succeeded where knowledge as yet was lacking, and he materialized himself, becoming visible to the heart-broken child.

Astonished, Walter roused himself and stammered: "Who are you? Where did you come from? How did you get in? I locked my door to keep everybody out."

"Never mind how I got in," smiled Cyril. "I'm here. And I've come to tell you that Lancelot is here, too. He isn't a bit dead; he's as alive as ever, and is trying to make you hear him."

"Lance! Lance!" cried Walter, his white face lightening, as he sprang up in bed. "Lance! Lance! come to me! Where are you? Oh, you're not here or you'd come," he moaned, sinking back again, the wan look of despair again dulling his eyes.

"Yes, he is here," said Cyril. "You just listen, and I'll say after him what he says. He says he isn't dead one bit, and you musn't be such a little fool. I beg your pardon," interjected Cyril, apologetically, feeling that the brotherly frankness might sound unsympathetic, "but that's what he says."

"Not dead! not dead! O, Lance, I thought you couldn't be. But where are you? Are you playing? Oh, don't play. I'm so wretched, I—I—can't play. I must see you." The eager voice broke in a sob.

Lancelot answered as eagerly, full of excitement, and Cyril had much ado to act as spokesman for both. At last Walter turned to him, his eyes ablaze, his cheeks flushed:

"Oh, I do believe you, because you're so kind," he said. "But if I could only see him, then I would know, then I should be quite sure; and if I could only hear his voice telling me he was happy, I should not mind a bit his going away again afterwards."

Cyril was beginning to say that he was afraid that was impossible, when he felt enwrapping him a loftier Presence, familiar and revered, and words came softly through his smiling lips: "Wait a little until I return, and you shall both see and hear him." And then little Walter was gazing wonderingly at the empty spot where his comforter had been.

Swifter than wind can race, sped Cyril to an elder friend, to one who had his own fair life in charge, his guide and helper in worlds visible and invisible. Brief words were enough to tell the story, and the two set forth together, and in a few minutes—as time counts on earth—they stood beside Walter, who was again drooping, half despairful, thinking that he had but fallen asleep and had dreamed a beautiful dream.

Ah! how bright was the radiance that broke, like the dawn of the morning, over his witsful eyes and down-curved mouth, as again young Cyril stood beside him; half-boy, half-angel to the child's eager gaze.

"You've come back! thank God you've come back! Then it's all true, and I shall really see him?" he panted, quivering with eagerness.

Was it possible that a boy's voice could breathe with such glad softness: "Yes, you shall see him now," and as Cyril gently lifted Walter's hand and placed it in that of Lance-

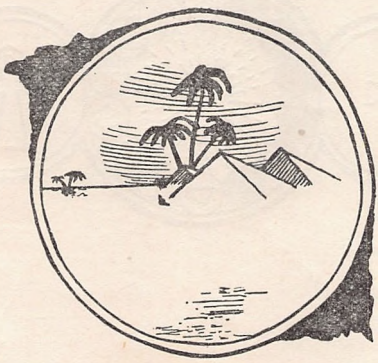
lot, the helper materializing Lancelot's astral form, the hands of the brothers were linked again warm and soft and living, and with a sob—ah! how different from the sobs of an hour ago—Walter sprang into his brother's arms, and found not death but love.

A strange group the three boys made as they stood in the pale gleam of the nightlight, joined in a common joy, so diverse in condition. Two materialized from the astral form, but one from the "living," one from the "dead"; the third in the ordinary physical body. And near them, invisible to them, the elder man, who had made their gladness possible. Perhaps the astral world showed few fairer scenes that night. The first raptures over, as the brothers stood, arms round necks in old familiar fashion, Cyril asked with his radiant smile: "Well, Walter, will you be quite sure now that Lancelot is alive, and that death doesn't really matter, after all?"

Oh, yes! yes! yes!" cried Walter, "I shall always be happy now," and he hugged his brother in renewed ecstacy. "I don't care for anything now, now that I know that Lance isn't dead."

Then Cyril, at his elder friend's suggestion, told Walter that this materialization was quite an unusual thing and could not be repeated, but that every night, when he himself slipped out of his body, he was in the world where Lancelot now was living, and could be with him, and that, even during the day, though he would not then be able to see him, Lancelot would for the present be near. At first, Walter fancied that being with Lancelot out of the body would "only be a dream"—so ill do parents teach their little ones—but Cyril's boy-like sincerity at last had its way, and Walter, accepting the idea with bright conviction, would go to sleep at once and taste his new joy. As he lay down, no longer weeping, the helper released Lancelot again from his dense covering, but Cyril waited awhile to hold Walter's hand in his, in soft security, till the worn child sank gently into slumber, the first peaceful sleep since his brother passed from his side. And as he slipped from the bodily prison, and the twain met again in the world invisible, the gladness of the first meeting seemed reborn, and the bright air gathered a new brightness from their joy.

Long his body slept, while the happy brothers found time all too short for their joyous converse, and the noon sun was shining ere Walter came back to the duller life of earth. So changed and glad his aspect that all wondered as he came springing down the stairs and, stammering with eagerness, told his wondrous tale. Small credence found he, though his parents could not be all displeased with a "dream" that gave their boy back to life and strength. So much had they feared for his life that even this "wild folly" was pardoned, and only to each other and nearest friends they whispered that they feared his grief had injured his brain. But the old nurse believes him fully, and crosses herself as she relates, over the fire at evening-tide, how Christ, who was once a child Himself, took pity on the heart-break of a child, and bade his guardian angel—Cyril laughs softly when he hears this phrase—bring back his brother for awhile from the dead to save her darling's life.—A.B.—From Theosophic Review.



O DANDELION!

O dandelion, with the face of gold—
Where have you been?
When last you were here you were white and old,
With bones that were dry and thin—
And the wind, the wind—blew you away—
One day!

O dandelion, with the pollen face—
How do you do?
Under my chin you may kiss a soft place—
Making it gold just like you!
Did fairies give you but a new dress?
Or make you a flower alive and fresh?
Ah, yes!

Ah, dandelions with your yellow heads—
What are you for?
Shall I dance and prance on your starry beds,
Or pick for my pinafore?
I'll fly and fly, as though I were chaff—
And laugh!

O dandelion, with the moon-gold face—
Where will you go?
Have the fairy-elves a dandelion place
When the world is white with snow?
But don't think of what cold winds will bring—
For now in the warm sun we'll dance and sing—
Gold thing!

—Laleta.

